Chronicles

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POLEMICS & EXCHANGES

On Environmentalism

We who look to *Chronicles* for some cogent commentary on our environmental dilemmas aren't getting enough from Chilton Williamson, Jr. Not that those campfire meditations, gut-wrenching elk hunts, and encounters with the West's fast-vanishing anarchists aren't worthy stuff; sometimes we can hear an echo of Ed Abbey.

But we need some Real Truth about resources in the West, and neither the welfare ranchers nor the land-grab mining companies, or any other mislabeled "Wise Use" faction has the courage to fess up and tell it like it is. We do not need a piece of obfuscation by Jim Christie, who invents something that doesn't exist, "The New Conservation Movement" (December 1995), and who somehow tries to make arch (environmental) villain Ron Arnold look respectable. As to the war of words between recreational apologist Ed Marston of *High Country News*, and rancher apologist Chilton Williamson over the true environmental situation in Catron County, New Mexico, and by inference to the situation in ten other Western states, we learn, again, that even good men often see just what they want to see.

Let us never forget that the West is dry, always will be dry, and even *ought* to be dry. This is one of J.N. "Ding" Darling's "Laws of Nature." Its federal portions appear to have been mismanaged by several somewhat compromised and corrupted land management bureaucracies (BLM, U.S. Park and Forest Service, Bureau of Mines, Bonneville Power, etc.) who have maintained a century-old tilt toward the old-time extractive industries and more recently caved in to the hedonistic recreational and "industrial" tourism industries.

Some of the high country locals appear to feel that those of us who live east of the Hundredth Meridian are not entitled to think of "their" federal lands as "our" federal lands. We to the east have already seen what cut-and-run logging can do, what Big Materialism can do, what big electricity liberals (TVA socialism) has done, and we suspect that the Cowboy Economy is as much of a dead-end as Kenneth Boulding said it was.

The rock upon which we must stand to do what is right in the West is not the shifting sand of hedonism, meism, and the self-aggrandizement of the "Wise Use" movement, but rather the self-denying and resource-saving philosophy of duty, honor, and country.

—*David Tillotson*
Lakemills, WI

CULTURAL REVOLUTIONS

SIR JAMES GOLDSMITH in *Le Piège* (Paris, 1993) eloquently defended the nation and regional free trade against internationalists advocating global free trade. He provoked a formal answer from the European Commission in October 1994. A month later the English version of *The Trap* appeared, followed by a torrent of contradiction and polemic from various academics, the governor of Hong Kong, and Norman Macrae of the *Sunday Times*. In the fall of 1995, Goldsmith took time from his work as leader of the Europe of the Nations group in the European parliament and advocate of a referendum on Britain's participation in the European Union to publish *The Response*. It is a calm but damning indictment of the future that awaits us under the globalist regime established by NAFTA and GATT.

For example, Goldsmith's chapter on "The Story of Global Free Trade" shows that while such trade causes phenomenal growth in the Gross National (or now, Domestic) Product, it increases structural unemployment and public debt. In France, the GNP has grown 80 percent in the last 20 years, but real unemployment rose from about 400,000 to over five million. This last figure is the equivalent of 22 million in the United States. With our inferior educational

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system, the actual numbers are likely to be much higher. Unemployment and an aging population put enormous pressure on the industrialized nations' social safety net. Goldsmith presents a chart that illustrates the Gross Debt (1994) plus the Net pension liabilities (1990) of major industrialized nations as a percentage of their GDP. These two figures show that the United States owes 130.6 of its GDP, while Japan owes 296.7 percent, Canada 345.6 percent, and Italy 356.2 percent of their GDP. The G7 countries owe an unweighted average of 264.7 percent of their GDP. This pyramid scheme can go on indefinitely, if countries with trade surpluses continue to lend money. What will happen if we see "the emergence of some sort of Sino-Indian-Japanese currency bloc," which would invest in itself and write off earlier loans as bad investments? Norman Macrae envisioned this eventuality in 1993, without drawing the likely conclusion: bankruptcy, ruin, mass unemployment, and murderous ethnic conflict.

Such works as Hobsbawm's *Industry and Empire* and Bairoch's *Economics and World History* show that the amazing economic growth of the United States in the 19th century was based on a massively protectionist system. Alan Tonelson's "Beating Back Predatory Trade" from *Foreign Affairs* (July 1994) proved that the prosperity of the American automobile, machine-tool, and computer-chip industries in the 1980's, while our television and VCR industries were disappearing, was due to protectionist treaties negotiated under President Reagan. The phenomenal prosperity of the Reagan years rested on protectionism. The Bush-Clinton years undermined that prosperity.

In 1993, Goldsmith predicted that multilateral free trade treaties yoking together such unequal partners as the United States and Mexico would cause unemployment in the United States while devastating the Mexican economy. Of prophets and treaties it is true that by their fruits ye shall know them. The December 10, 1994, *Economist* loudly mocked Ross Perot's prediction of a "giant sucking sound" of jobs being drawn into Mexico and quoted outgoing United States Secretary of the Treasury, Lloyd Bentsen, that NAFTA was "a win-win situation." By then Bentsen was being replaced by Clinton's *éminence grise*, Robert Rubin of Goldman Sachs. On December 20, 1994, the Mexican peso collapsed. From the United States perspective, this magnified the advantage of Mexican labor costs. In 1992, excluding transshipments, the United States had a $5.7 billion trade surplus with Mexico. The U.S. Department of Commerce estimated that by the end of 1995 that will have turned into a $20 billion trade deficit. Add to that $25 billion deterioration in our balance of trade the $50 billion "bailout" loan engineered by Secretary Rubin and Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan. Every day Mexico approves two or three maquiladora plants, factories just over the border aimed at the United States market.

In Mexico, inflation is estimated at 50 percent, the peso has lost half of its value, but salaries have risen only 20 percent. Unemployment for the poor and bankruptcies for the middle class are at record highs. The Mayans are in open revolt, and the average Mexican is close to despair. "NAFTA is a typical case of mutual poisoning," writes Goldsmith. Michel Camdessus of the International Monetary Fund warned of "a world catastrophe." Goldsmith notes, "Submarines are built with watertight compartments, so that a leak in one area will not spread and sink the whole vessel. Now that we have globalized the world's economy, the protective compartments no longer exist."

Cui bono? When Rush Limbaugh openly opposed the bailout, he was jawboned for hours by Alan Greenspan, after which Rush tried to console his television audience with the news that "Most of this money is not going to Mexico, folks. It's going to Wall Street." More than $5 billion of the bailout money went to Secretary Rubin's old firm, Goldman Sachs. Dr. Samuel Francis leaked the letter Rubin had sent to his Goldman Sachs clients, telling them that he hoped "to continue to serve them in his new position." Rarely have auspications been so fruitfully fulfilled. The demoralization of First World nations and the ravaging of the Third World are accomplished for the benefit of international corporations. Goldsmith's summary is as clear as it is chilling: "Some can still remember the old adage: 'What is good for General Motors is good for America.' But that was in the days when the corporate economy and the national economy had the same purpose. Now there are two distinct economies. Not only do they have different interests, but those interests are conflicting. As corporations switch production to the areas with the cheapest labour and then import the products made abroad, they destroy jobs at home and increase the nation's trade deficit."

The old distinctions between left and right have lost their significance. The French Revolution that created them is over, as François Furet has noted. Now internationalists, socialist and capitalist, or corporatists, as Goldsmith prefers to call them, face off against the believer in the importance and vitality of the nation. One group will lead us to the Brazilianization predicted by Jared Taylor and, after him, Michael Lind. The other defends the nations of the world as the great laboratories of freedom and creativity. C.S. Lewis feared that misuse of the social sciences could lead to the "abolition of man." Misuse of economics is leading to the abolition of the nation. In the end, the two results seem very similar.

—E. Christian Kopff

ALABAMA'S reintroduction of chain gangs has provoked the predictable cries of outrage. Howell Raines (formerly of Alabama and now of the *New York Times*) described Governor Fob James as "Alabama's current genius of bumpkin publicity." The politest expressions used to describe Governor James' decision usually include words like "barbaric," "reactionary," and "racist." Reactionary they may be, if "reaction" means a restoration of sanity, but chain gangs are neither barbaric as a means of punishment nor racist in motivation.

Howell Raines might not approve, but the people of Alabama do not seem to care what he or anyone in the media have to say about them or their governor. There was a time in the United States when an outsider's opinion carried little weight with the people of a sovereign state, and it made little difference that the outsider was a federal judge or even a President. The punishment of crimes—unless they were, like treason, strictly federal—was left up to the states, and if some state were foolish enough to eliminate capital punishment or execute thieves, it was nobody's business but the people of the state. Governor James is one of the only governors in recent years to uphold the rights and dignities of his office, and not long ago he threatened to call out the Alabama National Guard if federal authorities attempted to arrest a

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judge for beginning court with the Lord's Prayer. The chain gang issue may up the ante for Alabama: some civil rights groups are threatening to sue the state for violating international human rights guaranteed by United Nations conventions.

The main influence on Governor James' decision was money: the cost of incarcerating and "reeducating" prisoners has been rising steadily all over the United States, and by the beginning of 1995 the Alabama Department of Corrections had a $12 million deficit. In Alabama, prison conditions were so soft that convicts were actually turning down parole. One solution, employed by the sheriff of Maricopa County, Arizona, has been to house prisoners in tents and deny them all luxuries. Sheriff Arpaio has also put convicts to work on chain gangs, gleaning fields and cleaning up roadways.

In Alabama, the Corrections Commissioner, Dr. Ronald E. Jones, concluded that expensive rehabilitation programs simply did not work. Despite the alarming increases of expenditures on education and therapy, the recidivism rate remained unchanged. After spending billions of dollars on punishment, the people of Alabama were no better off. On the contrary, the number of four-and-five time offenders is on the rise. Chain gangs are a fair method of punishment, because they lower the cost per prisoner and allow the people to spend more of their money on their own needs, as opposed to the penological theories proposed by supposed experts whose credentials consist of college courses taken from other supposed experts.

It is also fair to convicts. In Alabama the chain gangs have been reserved for recidivists. Critics say, "doing time" is sufficient punishment. Perhaps it is, for the first-time drug-dealer or shoplifter. But how to distinguish the punishment of such first-timers from what is meted out to hardened repeat offenders who regard armed robbery and rape as a way of life? Besides, a healthy man might prefer to spend 12 hours a day out in the fresh air instead of in a cell, and some Alabama prisoners are apparently demanding to be put on the gangs.

It is only fair that in some sense the punishment fit the crime, and working 12 hours a day on a road gang is a juster punishment than mere incarceration. It also forces the prisoner to make some recompense to the society he has injured by his crimes, and he is aware, with every breath he takes, every rock he breaks, that he is paying for his crimes.

The race issue has been raised, inevitably. A disproportionate number of black males are, in fact, locked up in state prisons, and the imbalance is particularly noticeable in states like Alabama, where there is a large black population. Let us face the facts of the situation. The reality is that blacks, while they constitute only 11 or 12 percent of the national population, commit over 50 percent of the violent crimes. Of course they are more likely to be found on chain gangs, because they are more likely to be caught for murdering, assaulting, robbing, and raping their fellow citizens. If they do not wish to work at hard labor, they only have to give up their life of crime. By the time a man commits murder or rape, there is no point to a discussion of poverty, social conditions, or prejudice. Plenty of poor black men do not commit crimes, and plenty of affluent white men do. We can only punish individuals, not society.

One particularly "barbaric" aspect of the chain gang is the shame and embarrassment suffered by the convict. He imagines that the cars passing him by on the highway are filled with his friends and neighbors, all laughing at his misfortunes. A sense of shame is precisely what so many criminals lack. In some cases nobody at home or in school ever bothered to tell them right from wrong; in others, degraded community norms triumphed over the best efforts. As one retired car thief has written: "In spite of all my Sunday learning, to the bad I kept on turning. . . . No one could steer me right but Mama tried."

Whatever the cause of a man going bad, public exposure to ridicule, whether it takes the form of the stocks or a chain gang, may be the best step toward rehabilitation a prisoner will ever take. It is also a powerful warning to young men who are contemplating criminal acts. Chain gangs are a concrete and forceful expression of social disapproval, a public confession from the convicts that "I fought the law and the law won."

—*Thomas Fleming*

COLIN POWELL R.I.P.? With impeccable timing, I interviewed Eisenhower biographer and Colin Powell booster Stephen E. Ambrose just days before Powell's Noble Renunciation of Ambition. But before our chat disappears into that void (de?)populated by Milton Shapp's Inaugural Address and the Oscar acceptance speech of Pauly Shore, I retrieve this exchange:

> Me: One way to look at Eisenhower is as the Establishment's alternative to [Senator Robert] Taft, who as a classical liberal and antiwar isolationist was a potentially radical President. In a way, wouldn't Powell be playing Eisenhower to, say, Pat Buchanan's Taft?
>
> Ambrose: Yes. Not "in a way"—precisely.

Professor Ambrose is an honest partisan, and I suppose his man Powell would be no worse than Clinton or Dole or Gramm or the other replicants who would be President. The Free Soilers used to scoff at the "Whig and Democratic wings of the great Compromise party of the Nation," but the difference between Henry Clay and the party of Lamar Alexander and Richard Lugar is that Clay was a patriot and an American.

Buchanan has flaws—his Clayite advocacy of a protectionism that amounts to a blank check for the most powerful industries and most cunning lobbyists; his embrace of the truly rebarbative letterhead Christians with their Washington suites and suctorial feats toward Caesar—but he is saying enough unsayable things to make this the most interesting (and, in the end, glumly predictable) Republican race since 1952. If he catches fire in New Hampshire or South Carolina he'll be in for the Jerry Brown treatment. Recall that after Brown stunned Bill Clinton in the Connecticut primary, ABC's *Nightline* ran a heavily promoted story charging that—gasp!—marijuana may have been smoked in Governor Brown's house (while Jerry was away, no less). This was a classic "who cares?" revelation—Brown should have used it as an excuse to call for repeal of our police-state drug laws—but it threw his campaign off track long enough to ensure a clear path to the nomination for Clinton. (About whom I heard, in 1983, far more substantial rumors of cocaine use. This was not roorback but a plausible story told by a staffer from Clinton's first Arkansas administration—a woman who had nothing to gain by telling me, her coworker, lies about an obscure Southern governor. As the immortal Clash

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once sang of the illegal coke, "It's the pause that refreshes in the corridors of power.")

Wall Street was always pulling a servant out of its hat at the last minute to deny the GOP nomination to Taft. If the party holds to its wretched form, the Republicans will nominate Powell for VP to deflate the rising black nationalism and run him with Dole or, even better, Richard Lugar—"the thinking man's candidate," as he will no doubt be hailed as he lectures Nashua on the glories and duties of empire.

Mischief and sedition are afoot across the land of the free. Audacious tribunes, beware. When the sentimental Terre Haute socialist Eugene Debs spoke certain truths he wound up in jail (pardoned by the kindly Warren Harding, the least bad President of our century, after the intercession of his former Marion *Star* paperboy, Norman Thomas); and as for Huey Long and Malcolm X and George Wallace . . . well, you know. It's a wonderful time to be alive, though every now and then one catches glints and whispers of the clampdown that is sure to come and—if this is still America—fail.

—Bill Kauffman

AUNT JEMIMA, the jovial and plump woman who for decades graced the pancake mix cartons, was replaced a few years ago by a younger, slimmer figure, who was nevertheless identifiable as someone who could have been the niece of the original. Now Betty Crocker, the blonde, blue-eyed cook of cake mix fame, is to be replaced by a computer-generated composite of 75 female faces. This is an interesting change: it may not mean anything, but it may be a harbinger of the time when all distinctive ethnic and racial traits have to be submerged in a computer-generated blend.

Some practitioners of artificial insemination by donor make use of a so-called "cocktail" in which the sperm of several different men is mixed, so that it will be impossible (without elaborate DNA analysis) for a donor to know that he is the father of a specific child, or for a child to know that a particular donor is his father. The "cocktail" method has already produced one bizarre situation in the Netherlands, in which fraternal twins born from artificial insemination plainly had different fathers of different races. In some brave new world of the not-so-distant future, it will probably be possible to avoid this sort of thing by requiring that all babies be conceived with sperm cocktails computer-programmed to produce totally blended, generic offspring.

—Harold O.J. Brown

WENDELL BERRY'S new essay collection, *Another Turn of the Crank*, gives definition to broad political views that the author has previously left obscure. Regarding foreign trade, for example, he asks: "How can any nation or region justify the destruction of a local productive capacity for the sake of foreign trade?" Berry indicts both the liberals' affection for "a big central government" and the conservatives' attachment to "a supranational economy." Concluding that "the old political alignments have become virtually useless," he endorses an emergent "party of local community," embracing ranchers, farmers, market gardeners, small business proprietors, religious folk, and conservationists, behind a platform of ecological integrity and the renewal of local economies and communities.

Berry also confronts the issue of abortion. "We are now conducting a sort of general warfare against children," he writes, a group that "will inherit a diminished, diseased, and poisoned world." Berry acknowledges the right of a person to control his or her body, but continues: "If you can control your own body only by destroying another person's body, then control has come much too late. Self-mastery is the appropriate way to control one's own body, not surgery."

Sexuality and fertility are naturally joined, Berry contends, as is sexuality with the world. He acknowledges the argument that a fetus is not a child until it can live outside the womb, but adds: "I am aware also that every creature is surrounded by such questions of dependency and viability all its life. If we are unworthy to live as long as we are dependent on life-supporting conditions, then none of us has any rights. And I would not try to convince any farmer or gardener that the planted seed newly sprouted is not a crop."

Berry notes that there are certain situations that would justify an abortion, and he insists that opposition to the violence of abortion must logically lead to the *rejection* of violence against those who are born and against the world into which they are born. Yet he concludes: "The issue ultimately turns on one question: Is a human fetus a human being? I believe that it is. Anybody who believes that it is not must say what on earth it might be."

—Allan Carlson

OBITER DICTA: The 1995 Ingersoll Prize ceremony, which took place on November 5 at the Newberry Library in Chicago, drew some 130 guests from Chicago and beyond. Poet Zbigniew Herbert was, unfortunately, too ill to receive the T.S. Eliot Award for Creative Writing in person, but Professor Ewa Thompson of Rice University, an authority on Eastern European literature, received it in his place, reading a copy of his acceptance speech. Historian François Furet was there to receive the Richard M. Weaver Award for Scholarly Letters.

The latest John Randolph Club meeting, held on November 18-19 at the Villa Hotel in San Mateo, California, was graced by the presence of many stalwarts of the Old Right, including Joseph Sobran, Lew Rockwell, and Sam Francis, the newly elected president of the JRC. Among the attractions at this meeting was a floor debate on whether the federal government is the proper agency to protect the rights of American citizens. Lew Rockwell spoke eloquently on Establishment conservatives' failure to live up to their principles, and Justin Raimondo delivered a chilling account of the efforts of radical gay organizations in San Francisco—particularly ACT-UP—to stifle "homophobic" speech. The next JRC meeting will be held outside Washington, D.C., in September.

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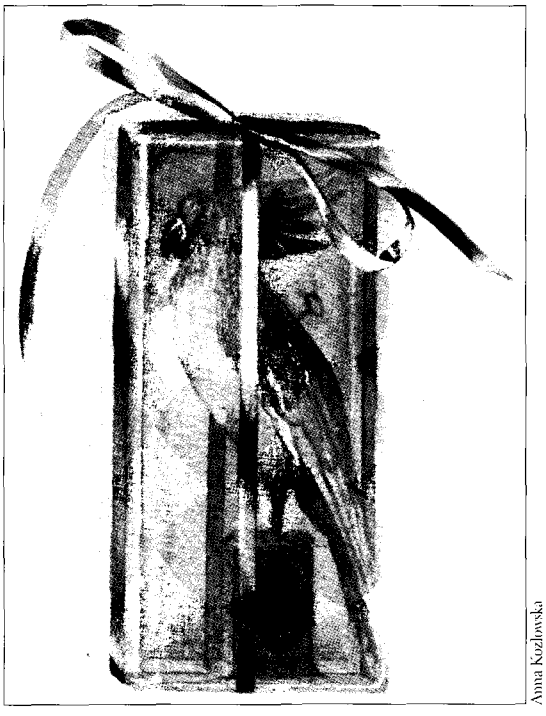

Anna Kozlowska

Talking to Strangers

by Thomas Fleming

"Black History Month, sometimes called February . . ." Sam Francis's witticism has been repeated *ad infinitum*, by friend and foe alike, usually with little appreciation of the broader implications. Ever since the French Revolution, Jacobin reformers conceived it their duty to redesign the calendar. If they cannot always get away with dating the history of the world by their revolution or even eliminate traditional religious holidays, they always succeed in glutting the seasons (and street names) with sacred dates like 14 juillet, cinqo di Majo, or the Friday or Monday that falls closest to the birthday of some beloved hero or martyr of the revolution.

The American calendar is increasingly dominated by these artificial feast days, and the annual rhythm is determined by consumerist seasons known as "summer vacation" and "only 90 more shopping days 'til Christmas," which nonbelievers celebrate with the same devotional zeal as the occasionally conforming Christians who established them.

It is the mark of the ideological state that private life and community traditions must take second place to the public good and the national cults. Wherever "the public interest" is concerned, no one is to be exempt. I once caught the end of a World War II propaganda film (*Gangway for Tomorrow*) in which a loafer (played by John Carradine) is arrested and asked by the local magistrate what is he doing to help the war effort. When Carradine declares that he can do what he likes in a free country, he is reprimanded and sentenced to work in a munitions factory. In the last scene he is chipping in to help save the world for democracy with all the cheerfulness of a Gorky hero.

Where there are no wars to prevent us from minding our own business, there are always crises, many of them manufactured. In recent years we have had to endure the teenage pregnancy crisis, the hole in the ozone crisis, the drug crisis, and the violence on television crisis. But crises, which are often boring and complicated, can be a hard sell. Crimes and scandals make for more effective distractions from everyday life, especially if they can be dramatized in a show trial. Since the 1970's, it seems, the only American calendar that counts—the television schedule—has been dominated by trials and hearings that have gradually usurped the functions of both news and entertainment.

Although I can vaguely remember my communist piano teacher talking about Joe McCarthy, my first real experience with show trials came with the Watergate hearings. I did my best to avoid the affair, but even the lack of a television set and a complete indifference to newspapers did not guarantee immunity. I listened to music on the radio in those days, and the only place for music was the local NPR station, and even if I managed to avoid Susan Stamberg, I could not avoid the conversations in the library or in the bar. No matter how much I tried to resist, I ended up knowing as much about Watergate as most of my fellow citizens.

After Mr. Nixon's resignation, it seemed like years before the next ordeal, but more recently, the spectacles have come one after another, with hardly a breathing space in between: Clarence Thomas/Anita Hill hearings, the Rodney King case, and, of course, the O.J. Simpson trial. People of my parents'

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generation dated their lives by what they were doing when the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor; for their children, the dramatic moments were the Kennedy assassination, Kent State, and Woodstock. In future years, the grandchildren will probably ask each other: "What were you doing when O.J. Simpson was declared not guilty?"

I referred to these spectacles as "show trials," not because they are necessarily engineered by a repressive regime or designed to eliminate political rivals, but because they are used in much the same way that Stalin used the Moscow trials to deflect criticism from the Communist Party's criminal ineptitude and to rally his people around a dramatic episode that could induce a feeling of national solidarity. The Soviet press, it goes without saying, played a vital role in whipping up public opinion:

> During the whole period of the trial, from the announcement on 28 February 1938 that it would take place until the actual executions, the papers had, of course, been full of the demands of workers' meetings that no pity be shown to the "foul band of murderers and spies." Leaders and articles rubbed it in. (Robert Conquest, *The Great Terror: A Reassessment*)

The Western press also did its best to "rub it in." While some leftist intellectuals and journalists condemned the trials (notably, John Dewey and the *Manchester Guardian*), the spectrum of liberal opinion ran from enthusiasm for Stalinist justice, expressed by Walter Duranty of the *New York Times*, to the restrained skepticism of the *New Statesman*.

One did not expect anything better from the Soviet press, which was entirely under the party's control. In fact, Lenin had moved quickly in 1917 to suppress newspapers that were, in order, rightist, liberal, and socialist. Before the revolution, he had promised to divvy up the press organs among the progressive parties according to their electoral strength—something like the system used for the radio and television networks controlled by the Italian government—but once in power, Lenin quickly saw the importance of establishing a press that would, in Ben Bradlee's words, "serve the public interest."

We do things differently here. We do not, for the most part, arrest dissident journalists or close down their papers. Instead, we allow the press lords to establish multimedia conglomerates and invite them into the governing coalition. The American press, in giving over their pages and air time to cheap thrillers—what the Italians call *gialli*—is, for the most part but not entirely, unwittingly serving as the propaganda arm of the regime.

Watergate might be regarded as a constitutional crisis that ought to engage the attention of citizens living in what they believed to be a free republic. That can scarcely be said of most of the crises and trials that interrupt *The Young and the Restless* and *Jenny Jones*. I did not know either of the Simpsons or anyone remotely associated with them. Neither of them represented anything significant: he, a hoodlum turned mercenary athlete; she, a loose woman who may well have driven her husband beyond the brink. If he killed her because he loved her and could not endure her behavior, perhaps he deserved, in a better world under a different legal system, to go free. I did not know Rodney King either, or Clarence Thomas, or Anita Hill, and while there may be a few Americans who regard such people as "role models," they must be very few.

Erwin Knoll—a veteran journalist—used to say that whenever the media were booming any particular crisis, it was a good indication that they had designs on our liberties, and a cynic might observe that as President Bush and Clinton have dragged us inexorably into the Balkans War, the press cartel has succeeded, first in making sure there is no honest criticism of American foreign policy, and second, in concocting a series of celebrity incidents that degrade the moral conscience of the citizens. When the *National Enquirer* actually scooped the networks on the O.J. story, it was clear that the distinction between news and scandal had been blurred, perhaps irremediably.

There are countless books and articles on the press: its history, its role in defining democracy, its problems, its scandals. What is hard to find is a serious discussion of the fundamental dishonesty, the trivial huckstering that characterizes even the best newspapers. I recently had dinner with a distinguished European scholar, who, with a little encouragement, asked me why there was so little freedom of discussion in the United States. Was it due to the village mentality described by Tocqueville? Or was it merely the effect of the tight grip of the media oligarchy? If the latter was true, how did I explain the parallel development in the universities?

These are difficult questions, which I do not quite know how to answer. But one stab at it takes us to the heart of the American people. If every nation gets the government it deserves, then perhaps our national dishonesty is only a reflection of the cowardice and dishonesty of most of our citizens. George Garrett, in *Poison Pen*, argued only half in jest that "American journalism does indeed perform a valuable public service":

> For if, even for a brief period, a large number of Americans stopped swallowing the . . . (let's call it Pablum so as not to be crude and vulgar) the unadulterated Pablum that is concocted to stifle their hunger for truth, and if they were permitted to enjoy the self-indulgence of allowing their encephalitic and atrophied brains the merest little reflexive twitch of thought, a vague, faint, dimly realized, atavistic tremor of vestigial skepticism, why, sirs, all hell would break loose!!
>
> It would be worse (or better, depending on your point of view) than the Terror which followed the French Revolution. . . . If, for some utterly whimsical and unanticipated reason, honesty were to become a factor in American life, it is obvious that the immediate result would be chaos and anarchy.
>
> The People, instantly deprived of all their leaders in every known field of endeavor, would be a swirling mass of bleating, helpless sheep. And there would be no wolves to profit from this condition.

Our dependence upon the *Entertainment Tonight* reporting of network news and the government propaganda of the popular press confirms us in our servility, but the consequences go far beyond politics. The erosion of the strong public opinion, on which any republic rests, is serious enough, but moral and intellectual liberty can survive and even flourish under tyranny. Why have they been so successfully repressed in the benign despotism of consumer-socialism? One answer, perhaps not the whole answer but one part of it, is to be found in the case with which we have been persuaded to concern ourselves with strangers: movie stars, overnight criminal sensations, pathetic

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victims of oppressions in countries whose names we can hardly pronounce. Here the media have to accept some of the blame for the worsening American character.

I made this point, *obiter dictum*, some years ago, and it is worth going into again. For several decades the primary point of the various "media" has been the arousal of strong feelings in their audiences. These feelings are not directed toward familiar objects—a reader's mother, girlfriend, child, or neighbor—but toward complete strangers.

The passion most commonly appealed to is sexual desire. The attempt to arouse desire or stimulate passion for strangers by use of words and images goes by the name of pornography. In origin, *pornographia* means the depiction of prostitutes and prostitution, and pornography is the esthetic or imaginative dimension of prostitution, a business devoted to promoting the illusion that one human being is having an erotic relationship with another.

The reality of the "relationship" is simpler: a cash transaction without emotional or moral attachment. Money "can't buy me love," but the man who hires a prostitute can buy the illusion of love or passion or innocence, and it is this illusion that men are willing to pay for, not the mere act of fornication. If a discharge of surplus erotic energy were the only point, a man might find safer and less costly alternatives. No, what he is paying for in hiring a prostitute is the illusion of attachment, and, on a lower level, the purchaser of pornography is pursuing the same fantasy.

There are other desires, other interests, other passions: pity, fear, anger, and hatred, to name only a few. Aristotle believed that the object of tragedy was the purgation or discharge of pity and fear from those who participated as observers in the experience. However, the object of pornography and of the "trash" journalism produced by the television networks and the great newspapers is not purgation but merely stimulation, and while the news stories may be as fictional as the tale of the witch who murders her rival and her own children in order to punish her lover, we read and watch these fables as if they were real events whose participants are known to us. Someone else's child, trapped in a well, monopolizes the attention of millions of Americans who neglect their children or entrust them to the care of strangers, and an airline disaster is celebrated as a major news event, even though the 200 people killed represent only a tiny fraction of the people who die, from various causes, every day throughout the world. This is information only in the sense that an exact count of the pop bottles found on Jones Beach in a given day is information.

A concern for distant strangers is, for the most part, an entirely futile exercise in cheap compassion. There is, after all, little that we can do to assist earthquake victims in Japan or to relieve the sufferings of the Christian women and children brutalized by Islamic fundamentalists in the Balkans War. Where we can do something we know to be helpful, such charity is meritorious—although such occasions are less frequent than we think. But weeping over the images of starving children can have the effect of blinding us to the problems of the lady down the block nursing a dying husband.

The interest that we Americans take in the misfortunes of complete strangers is among the most bizarre characteristics of modern life. Of course, this moral plague did not break out recently. Ever since the creation of the yellow press, motion pictures, and television, the less rooted elements of our population have driveled after celebrity actors and sports heroes, begging for autographs, joining fan clubs, reading magazines. There was a recent story of some poor Australian working man who came all the way to Indiana to visit the boyhood shrine of his hero, James Dean.

But it is not just uneducated workers and lonely housewives who lust after celebrities. Read the memoirs of famous politicians and journalists and note how many of them boast of knowing actors, singers, and athletes—as if it were not something to be ashamed of. American Presidents eagerly cultivate relations with Jane Fonda or the Beach Boys, and it is remarkable to see how willingly the great and powerful reduce themselves to the level of "the rich and famous." What is the difference between Bill Clinton—or his predecessors—and Regis Philbin or Taki?

An interest in celebrities is, in most cases, a sign of personal emptiness, of a life evacuated of meaning. It is natural to respect heroes and revere saints, but when a man collects celebrities, whether in the lower form of autographs and "fanzines" or in the higher form of premeditated name-dropping, he is confessing to the inadequacy of his private life. This is particularly touching, since so many celebrities—politicians and stars alike—are two-dimensional cutouts, devoid of an inner life. George Garrett tells Christie Brinkley in *Poison Pen* that it is ridiculous to complain that she is not the same person as the girl on the magazine covers. Nobody cares, he insists, apart from her "family and kinfolks, your few true friends and maybe your husband Billy Joel." Scratch the last.

Our capacity for love and concern is finite, so is our ability to take an interest in something. Few of us can, simultaneously, study Japanese, Hebrew, and Slovenian. Make this argument, and someone will be sure to say that most people only use a small fraction of their brains. This is a cherished piece of white urban folklore—something akin to the black nationalist fantasy that AIDS was created by the CIA. Of course we do not use our brain to its full capacity, any more than we employ all the power of our computer in writing an essay. Some of the memory is tied up in installation programs, dictionary and thesaurus, modem software, and a host of operations I cannot begin to imagine. While it *is* true that few of us give our brains the daily workout they deserve, we could do only marginally better, even if we invested half the day in studying the calculus.

Watching Oprah and reading *TV Guide* are not only empty exercises for anyone who is not a satirist; they not only do nothing for us, but they actually deflect us from our proper duties and concerns. Celebrity journalism does not merely waste our time; it wastes ourselves. The more we concern ourselves with David Letterman, the less interest we take in our own lives. Every day, we become less real, less authentic. Lost in the electronic crowd of adoration, we may forget how to find our way back to ourselves, and we are only happy when we can find a connection with the mystical world of stardom. In Walker Percy's first novel, the moviegoing hero, Binx Bolling, catches sight of a pair of newlyweds on the streets of New Orleans. The reality of their "drab little lives" is graced momentarily by the sight of William Holden, who smiles a blessing on their union.

In every earlier phase of our national intoxication, a new technology was sure to be offered as a remedy for empowerment: educational television, cable TV and VCR's, PC's and satellites—all have been sold as tools of reempowerment by the current generation of lightening-rod salesmen. If I had been writing a few years ago, I should have speculated, at this point, on

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the next step into virtual reality, but before I could think about raising the question the step had already been taken. Now we are being told that the solution to our woes, public as well as personal, is to be found somewhere on the Internet.

What can you say to people who think that every day, when they wake up, the world is a blank slate on which to scribble a new reality? This is going Locke one better. It is no longer the mind of a newborn individual that is a *tabula rasa* but the world itself, newborn with every innovation. We are always either at the dawn of a new age or at the end of history. Unhappily, this utopian optimism reveals that the one really blank slate is the American mind.

The Internet, we are told, represents the next wave of personal and political liberation. We can make our travel plans, find new recipes, and make friends with disembodied spirits who use code-numbers and aliases. According to stories in the popular press, real marriages, however frail, are undermined when husbands spend so many hours talking to their imaginary friends that they have no time for their family. Women are not immune. A jilted husband, writing recently to Ann Landers, complained that his wife had been seduced by one of her electronic penpals and was refusing to return to him. This is some nightmare out of *Poltergeist*, when the ghosts on the screen invade our living rooms.

Not only our living rooms and our bedrooms, but also the voting booths. According to the author of *The Electronic Republic*, the Internet will restore the direct, participatory democracy of ancient Greece. Now, I am all in favor of restricting the vote to adult male children of native-born citizen parents, but even supposing that we had access to real information on home pages and bulletin boards set up by candidates and interest groups, one essential item is being left out of the equation: personal knowledge of a man's character. Even a television image or a stump speech gives us more insight into what a candidate is really about than all the information in the world on his voting record or official positions. If Bill Clinton suddenly adopted a pro-life/antigovernment platform, would any sensible conservative trust him? Look into his eyes: the two-dimensional television screen is deep enough to plumb the depths of his character.

Each new advance in "information technology" begins by promising us individual liberation and ends up making us the prisoner of the technology. Gossip is a better guide to politics than the newspapers, because good gossip sometimes represents a genuine leak of information through unfiltered sources and almost always reflects, even when it is entirely false, the sense of the people. The wildest rumors about the Vincent Foster suicide may turn out to be closer to reality than the official story, but whatever the truth, the rumors say a great deal about the public's perception of this administration.

But the worst of newspapers is better than the best news program, because we can put down the newspaper, have second thoughts about the facts or point of view, compare it with other papers. With television, we are caught up in the imaginary stream of someone else's consciousness. We can turn it off, but we cannot, so long as we are in the stream, exercise our critical judgment, unless the story goes so roughly against our grain that it turns us into the antagonist who shouts back at Dan Rather. To resist requires the very power of the will that television has undermined.

Television is a primitive form of mind control compared with the possibilities offered by computerized journalism. Of course, the Internet offers boundless opportunities for hatching the best kind of conspiracies. Use it, if you can, as you would use any instrument of communication—a waxed tablet or a bullhorn or an overhead projector, but never allow yourself to get sucked into the illusion of empowerment.

There may be strength in numbers, but it is not your strength, and there can be no community with people whose lives you do not share. It is not morally healthy to fill your head with alien experiences. Schizophrenics who hear voices in their heads would give anything for a moment of silence. There are tens of millions of people on the Internet, but, for all the useful knowledge they can give you, their name might just as well be Legion. Books take days and weeks to master and digest. Quicker access to more and more information may help the reporter in preparing his story, but it also makes him less critical about the torrent of facts, more gullible about the sources.

There are more voices babbling in Hell than there will ever be online, and the sum total of their wisdom would fit comfortably on the head of a pin, with room enough left over for several choirs of angels. Your mother must have told you, "Don't talk to strangers." Don't listen to them either, especially if they are journalists. C

Seville 1492-1994

by Gloria Whelan

In the park of Maria Luisa
newspapers lie unfurled,
the world bartered
for Andalusian light,
for the thick scent
of orange blossoms.

Let the Moors raise their towers of gold,
grow gardens that froth
with white roses,
Ferdinand and Isabella
will march south
to drown them
in their perfumed bath.

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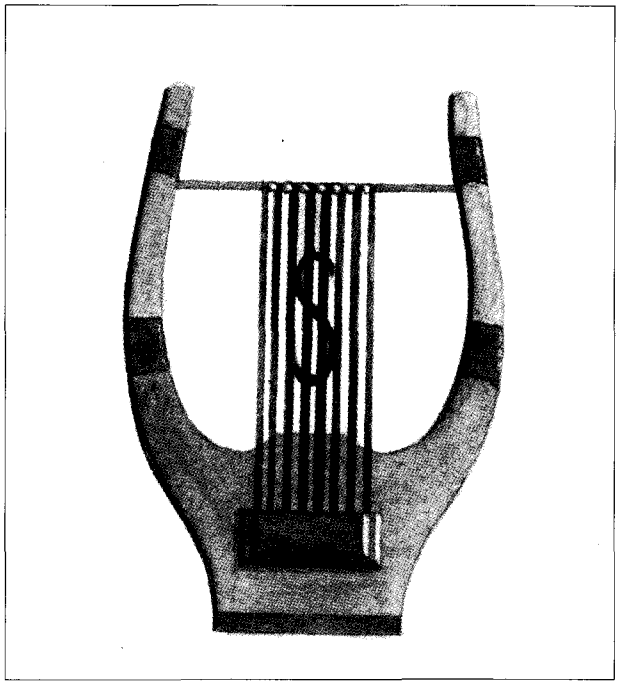
The Matter of Money

Media Empires and the Shaping of Democracy

by Philip Jenkins



Anna Kozlowska

Over the last year, the doings of the media have occupied center stage in the media themselves, an obsession that seems harmless if somewhat incestuous. There has been a tournament atmosphere surrounding the issue of whether the damsels CBS or ABC would fall to one or another suitor, and a sense of awe at the financial buccaneering that has produced some of the largest takeovers in history. After all, where's the harm? Unlike (say) the O.J. Simpson case, this is a bloodless form of jousting in which the defeated lose nothing save honor, and perhaps the odd billion in cash or stocks. Nor is this type of media concentration historically new. Complaints about the excessive power of publishers and media barons date back to the earliest days of the popular press, and received a huge stimulus from the tumor-like growth of the Hearst chain from the turn of the century: *Citizen Kane* is the classic memorial to the megalomaniac publisher who wanted to be king, or at least to be loved. What, if anything, is different about the current trends that have made colossi out of multimedia concerns like Disney and Time-Warner?

Several major differences can be cited. In earlier years, news outlets could be easily distinguished from publishing or entertainment vehicles with which they might be loosely connected through common holding companies. Today, however, the "press" broadly defined is bound up with the same information technology that dominates an elaborate and booming entertainment industry. Concern about blatant partisanship in news or political coverage therefore gives way to subtler worries about pervasive social biases and the homogenization of culture. In addition, these concerns apply on the global scale, anywhere in fact that can be reached by the satellites transmitting the films or television programs manufactured in the United States. Finally, there is a critical difference in the concept of control and regulation. In the days of Hearst, it was feasible to imagine a government taking the relatively simple steps required to suppress the worst excesses of financial banditry and editorial irresponsibility, but this can scarcely be done when the forms of bias and influence are so relatively inconspicuous, if nonetheless potent.

In 1938, George Seldes' classic book *The Lords of the Press* performed a hostile dissection of the American news media, a polemic that can still be read with immense profit. I cannot offhand think of a modern survey of this depth and insight, possibly because any recent parallel would certainly run the risk of libel suits: and who would publish it? As Seldes remarks, "The press publishes the news, true or false or halfway, about everything in the world except itself." The veteran leftist exposed the political and antilabor biases of the newspapers and their affiliated radio stations, their visceral hostility to New Deal reforms and anything vaguely "pink." He portrayed the

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publishers as a clandestine cartel, intimately bound up "with the power and paper trusts, with all the banks, and with all the powerful financial institutions which control the country." While much of the book reflects the peculiar political circumstances of the age, Seldes is devastating on the constraints to free reporting that automatically arise from the commercial interests of the media magnates. He is equally revealing about the organized pressure groups that could not even be mentioned in print in anything other than a flattering tone, lest a boycott threaten sales and (above all) advertising: now *that* would make a good exposé today. Even in 1938, decades before any Surgeon General's warnings, Seldes was complaining that the press failed to report frightening research about the health damage caused by tobacco products, for fear of offending the industry. The central message was that "The matter of money is the chief obstacle to a free press."

The matter of money was crucial to reducing choice in the press over the course of the century. While there never was a golden age of streetwise journalists and hardbitten independent editors, earlier decades were indeed marked by a striking diversity of active print media. Most major cities in the early 20th century had at least two or three daily newspapers, generally covering a variety of political viewpoints, and these outlets were supplemented by an active ethnic and political press. More significant, the different outlets were owned by several distinct proprietors. This relative cornucopia was already under threat by the 1930's, with the absorption or destruction of local papers by great national chains like Hearst, Scripps Howard, Block, and Gannett. In the new regime, papers and radio stations began a long-term process of consolidation and rationalization that accelerated dramatically after the coming of television. By the 1970's, the one-newspaper city was a common feature of the social landscape, and that newspaper was likely to belong to a national or international conglomerate. Though the chains were by no means monolithic in terms of ideology or partisan allegiance, they rarely strayed far outside a fairly narrow political consensus.

The long dominance of print media was challenged in the 1950's by the rise of television, but even this change was minor compared to the explosive growth of other forms of electronic media in later decades. Today, the dissemination of news is inextricably bound up with other activities collectively bracketed as "entertainment." This includes books, magazines, and newspapers as well as records, tapes, and compact discs, in addition to films, television programs, video games, and CD-ROM, and the vastly profitable "spinoffs" available from merchandising. The profitability of the latter is apparent to any parent subjected to blackmail for the purchase of items bearing the name or likeness of Pocahontas, Casper, or the Flintstones. Today, Americans spend some $400 billion on "entertainment," a category which also includes cable fees and gambling. The combined industries employ 2.5 million people, a 66 percent increase since 1988 alone, and the resulting jobs and investment have been critical in preventing regions like California from collapsing utterly with the decline of Cold War military spending.

Changing technology has brought together the realms of print, electronic media, and recorded music, a point obvious to anyone sitting at a computer that is simultaneously playing a compact disc, or using the Web to access a video clip. Within a decade, the distinctions between traditional media, computers, and communication networks will have faded to vanishing point, a symbiosis that is already foreshadowed by the current convergence of the corporations presently active in these diverse fields. Technology also overwhelms traditional national boundaries, so that new media empires are desperately anxious to preserve and promote their interests in such lucrative regions as Europe and the Pacific Rim. Internationally, the American balance of payments would look far grimmer without the profits from entertainment, a product avidly consumed by a global market with no great taste for American-made cars or electronics. American makers of film, video, and music already earn 40 percent of their revenues overseas.

By the 1980's, media enterprises were seeking to control activities in several types of activity, venturing into print publishing and music, both making and distributing films and television programs, and running their own television stations and cable networks. For decades, federal authorities attempted to regulate this sort of crossover for fear of permitting monopolies that could stifle free expression, but such qualms were overridden by the free market atmosphere of the Reagan, Bush, and Gingrich years. When the history of the American media comes to be written, the year 1995 might well be regarded as a turning point, in which Congress and the Federal Communications Commission finally abolished or significantly reduced many of the restrictions which had limited the growth of the conglomerates, permitting, for example, a single company to own two television stations in the same market, or to hold newspapers in a market where it already owned radio or television concerns. A company could now own television stations broadcasting to over a third of the American market, while national television networks are allowed to compete freely in the syndicated television market. Limitations on foreign ownership of media corporations have been *de facto* suspended by the administration's failure to check the activities of Rupert Murdoch's Australian-based News Corporation, with its wide holdings in American newspapers and its Fox Broadcasting system.

Deregulation was accompanied by a sharp growth in the size and power of the media giants, and their integration into multi-industry concerns. This trend originated in the 1980's with General Electric's acquisition of RCA, which included the NBC network, while ABC was purchased by the Capital Cities syndicate, and *Time* merged with Warner. Even these enormous mergers were dwarfed by the developments of last summer, when CBS was absorbed into a Westinghouse empire that also included such nonmedia enterprises as nuclear power, defense electronics, office furniture, and even refrigerated trucking. In media terms, Westinghouse now found itself in charge of 15 television stations and 39 radio stations, with several hundred radio and television affiliates.

Another 1995 venture combined Disney and Capital Cities/ABC, which together earned revenues of some 17 billion dollars and had a total market value in excess of 40 billion. The second largest merger in American history, this deal created a huge conglomerate with 85,000 employees, about the same strength as Westinghouse. The overweening Mouse controls 11 television stations and over 220 affiliates, in addition to 21 radio stations, and newspapers in 13 states. It also operates several of the best-known cable channels, including Lifetime, Arts and Entertainment, the Disney Channel, and the sports network ESPN, which enjoys international popularity. Disney is an example of the oligarchic control prevailing in the seemingly freewheeling world of broadcast cable, in the arena of "500

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channels and nothing on." Though the dial appears to offer a bewildering range of choices, actual control and direction is vested in very few hands.

Finally (and the largest such marriage to date), Time-Warner allied with Ted Turner's media empire to create a powerhouse controlling magazines, books, records and compact discs, sports franchises, film production, and a cable complex that includes Turner Broadcasting, CNN, and a huge and profitable collection of classic movies. Leading shareholders in the new giant included Turner himself as well as the Seagram company, dominated by the hugely wealthy Canadian Bronfman family, and the TCI cable network. Together, the cable enterprises of Time-Warner-Turner and TCI reach over a half of American households. Though Time-Warner, Disney, and Westinghouse represent the Goliaths of the American media, there are several other major powers also susceptible to absorption into still bigger agglomerations. These include News Corporation, TCI, Gannett, and Viacom, the last with holdings in Paramount and the Blockbuster video store chain.

Still other critical players are not yet fully identified in the "media/entertainment" category, but their full participation cannot be far away. The telephone companies are waiting in the wings to play their full role in the exploitation of fiber optic technology, and already TCI has attempted unsuccessfully to arrange a merger with Bell Atlantic. Presumably, the only reason why a giant like Microsoft has not yet ventured deeper into entertainment is for fear of exciting still greater nightmares about its corporate hegemony, and possibly new antitrust suits. To see the future, take a look at the interactive movies already available on CD-ROM, and featuring major stars: now imagine how these might be transmitted in another decade, presumably by means that altogether bypass traditional movie or television technology. If computer and telecommunication companies distribute these items, how long will it be before they also produce them? In addition to entertainment, computer and telephone concerns will soon diversify into other fields closely related to their expertise, including financial services and banking. The corporate world of the new century should see an even closer integration of the "three C's": cable, computers, and communications. Buried somewhere in there are the organs that gather, interpret, and disseminate news.

Media empires have indeed increased dramatically in scale and complexity, but this trend has been apparent in every other sector of the economy, from food processing to the manufacture of aircraft or widgets. So does it matter? That there is a fundamental difference here has long been recognized by legislators, who know from bitter experience that control of the media has political consequences: for most of the present century, the first targets of coup plotters were usually radio stations and telephone exchanges. In terms of news and political commentary, the new lords of the press wield a potential power that must exercise an enormous temptation, even if this has not to date directly attracted magnates like Michael Eisner or Gerald Levin. Even Ted Turner has been content to influence affairs beyond American shores, as suggested by his bizarre claim that his CNN brought down the Berlin Wall, and the far more substantial boast that his network was responsible for deciding Western policy in Bosnia.

To see the full potential of the political press-lord, we would have to look back in American history to the days of William Randolph Hearst, Seldes' "Public Enemy Number One," or overseas to the staggering power of Rupert Murdoch in the party affairs of Australia or Great Britain. In Italy, television magnate Silvio Berlusconi made himself Prime Minister of a nation utterly disaffected with the sterility of party conflict, a precedent which must make us rejoice that our own Tribune of the People, Ross Perot, made his fortune in computers rather than television. To understand the mind of the media titan, we might consider Evelyn Waugh's magnificent portrait of "Lord Copper," based on the Harmsworth family who were the British equivalents of the American Hearsts. Though talentless in his own right, the lordship demanded the fealty of any aspiring politician and brooked no contradiction: when agreeing with him, one responded "Absolutely, Lord Copper," while negation had to be phrased "Up to a point, Lord Copper." The word "no" was as impermissible as it presumably would be today for a Murdoch or a Berlusconi.

News media have always been commercially driven operations that seek to maximize profit, but the emerging complexes are new in their annihilation of the distinctions between news and entertainment, and simultaneously between commercial and political interests. The news/entertainment nexus is a familiar complaint, but the exploitation of news media for other purposes is a phenomenon that still requires analysis. Last year, we witnessed the media fervor over the introduction of Microsoft's software package Windows '95, an outburst that can best be understood in the context of the commercial interests at work. Among the cheerleaders was Gannett's *USA Today*, which coincidentally is available on the "Microsoft Network," as is NBC. As the *Washington Post* noted, the fawning attention paid by CNN and other Turner outlets may have been tied to the fact that Turner was at that time courting Microsoft's Bill Gates as a partner in a merger attempt. In Britain, Gates bought up the day's issue of the once-august *Times* and distributed it free, complete with Windows '95 advertising materials. Concepts like journalistic independence acquire a rather humorous tone in this environment.

The diversity of media conglomerates raises policy issues that are quite intractable for regulators, not least in detecting potential conflicts of interest. When a television network is an integral part of a corporate "family" (more or less in the Corleone sense), there will be pressures, however subtle, to discourage journalists from pursuing given stories too aggressively, and the defense and nuclear interests of firms like Westinghouse and GE raise obvious problems in this regard. These internal considerations far exceed even the advertising concerns that were so critical in Seldes' day.

One of the nastier political scandals to erupt from the recent wave of media mergers involved Rupert Murdoch's desire to secure favorable treatment from the Congress and administration, a prospect that would be greatly enhanced by the favor of House Speaker Newt Gingrich. Following meetings between the two men, Gingrich received a very generous book contract from HarperCollins, a subsidiary of News Corporation, which was the instrument of Rupert Murdoch. While Gingrich strenuously denied wrongdoing, the deal showed the potential for surreptitiously rewarding an ally with nothing as vulgar as a paper bag stuffed with used bills: But why should a hypothetical friend not be remunerated with special terms for his magazine articles or his memoirs, or even with favorable puffery neatly timed to coincide with a difficult primary? Though this particular corporate affiliation is easy to trace, other links are often as lengthy and contorted as an Old Testament genealogy, where

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several lines of text may be required to determine who ultimately begat which subsidiary.

This does not mean that legislatures need only concern themselves with regulating the content and control of news and overtly political media, while they can be left unchecked in such harmless and nonpolitical areas as video games, music, or sport. When a single conglomerate like Disney dominates such a vast section of popular culture, it is able to dictate some of the basic assumptions of everyday life and social relationships. This point was illustrated by Time-Warner's postmerger decision to slough off a music subsidiary that had earned political obloquy by producing the more extreme "gangsta rap" groups. Though one may sympathize with this decision and condemn the "music" in question for its violence and misogyny, it is possible to argue that rappers are urban poets expressing (however crudely) an authentic vision of urban America. Whichever stance one takes, it is repugnant to see an aspect of culture regulated solely by a corporate desire to avoid offending Republican politicians who suddenly decide to reinforce their rightist credentials. Couldn't the company have made a decision on the grounds that it appeared right to them, rather than bowing to politico-commercial expediency?

If the instance of rap seems dubious, we might also consider the homogenization of attitudes in other potentially delicate areas. A filmmaker or film producer might wish for artistic reasons to depict a story in which (for example) a woman falls in love with a man who has raped or beaten her, or a man becomes homosexual because he has been abused by a pedophile, or a career is destroyed through the workings of affirmative action, or Israeli settlers maltreat and exploit Palestinian Arabs, or any one of 1,000 other instances of political incorrectness. Maybe the director wants an ending that is unhappy, unsettling, or merely confused. Any one of these circumstances might arguably produce a film far more complex and interesting than most of the pabulum available on the screens of television or the Multiplex, but the power of corporate concerns makes it virtually impossible that such risky ventures would ever be produced. Apart from natural corporate timidity about cultural matters, conglomerates are sensitive about offending any interest group that might invoke a boycott, or mobilize friendly legislators to penalize the corporate parents of an offending production company. Why strike at a company that produces rap music or commits thoughtcrime in matters like rape or homosexuality, when one can deny its corporate ally a defense contract or a license to build a power plant? And if the choice is phrased in these terms, any sane executive will sacrifice the culturally daring for the orthodox, bland, and boring.

Corporate giganticism promotes cultural spinelessness and (however unconsciously) propagates the social norms of particular interest groups. This enforces political orthodoxy just as clearly as if the news programs allotted only favorable coverage to one party or candidate. Worse, the globalization of media corporations means that consumers in one country no longer have the option of viewing cultural experimentation in another society with different norms and laws. France, Italy, Japan, and Russia are also watching the latest treasure from Stallone or Whoopi Goldberg, and so, probably, are the residents of China and Mali. Domestic producers in these other nations have the option of either withering or adapting until they can pander to global markets.

The construction boom on the "information superhighway" may make this an odd moment to be worried about issues like monopoly and homogeneity: Has it ever been easier for a group or individual to disseminate views worldwide, with the minimum of censorship? While the electronic frontier still has a certain Wild West quality, it is very much open to question how long this freedom will survive both the regulatory endeavors of politicians and commercial pressures from the handful of giant networks like America Online and Compuserve that channel the vast majority of traffic. The only good feature in all this might be that the American party system has never been as vulnerable to the manipulation of media barons as its European counterparts, which serve far more united societies and compact ruling elites. For all the cultural damage they can wreak, they are rarely kingmakers. American democracy survived William Randolph Hearst, and it might outlast Michael Eisner and even Ted Turner. c

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El Escorial 1598

by Gloria Whelan

Little pleasure for Phillip
in the long week's march,
gout makes a penance
of the miles once swallowed
in a single day's hard ride.

Along the dusty road the sullen
homage of the village women
reminds him that he sent
their sons to die in France.

The granite arms
of the grey giant hunched
above the rocky knoll
embrace him. Immured

in his room beside the altar
he sees the consecration,
white doves beating wings
against the flinty wall

some fall wounded, some soar
above the Guardarrama mountains
that mark Spain like a headstone.

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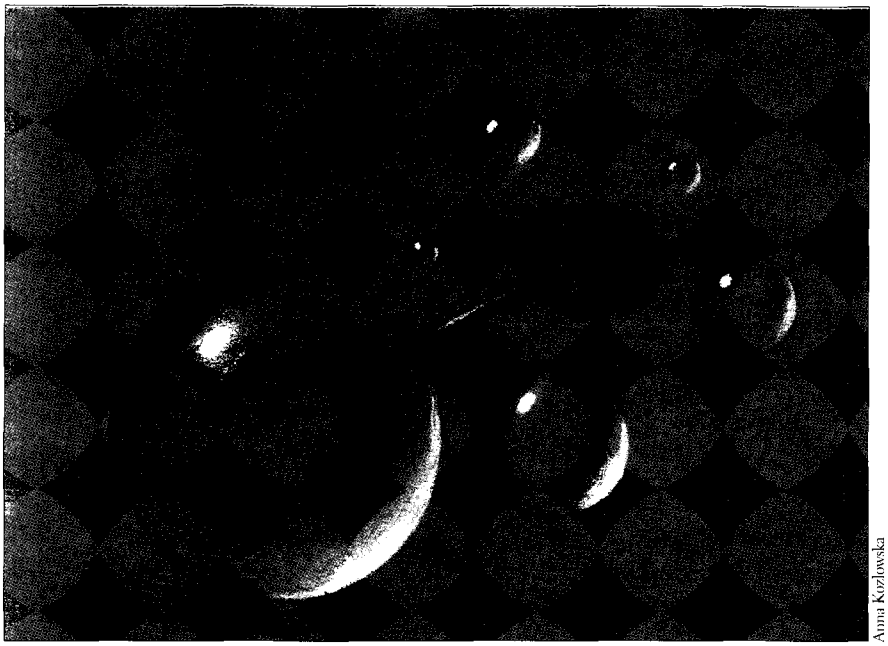
Communication as Manipulation

The Case of Hillary Rodham Clinton

by Janet Scott Barlow



Anna Kuzlowska

In her chosen role as doting public grandmother to both Bill and Hillary Clinton, columnist Mary McGrory is ever on the alert for opportunities to whip from her journalistic handbag her favorite images of those two extraordinary kids. In true grandma-like fashion, she is transfixed by their every utterance and sees their failures as simply an excess of good intentions. Of Bill, she wrote in August—nearly three years after his election—that he had just "made a remarkable discovery. He has found out that he is President." Ms. McGrory thereby proved the truism that grandmothers delight in behavior others find stupefying.

Mary McGrory's deepest feelings, however, are reserved for Hillary. Indeed, she feels Mrs. Clinton's pain, calling the First Lady "poor girl" when the public mistakes for overreaching her energetic willingness to *apply* herself. After informing all who would listen of young Bill's winsome discovery of his presidential status, a now-suffering McGrory wrote that as for Hillary, she is in "a post-['94] election slump," for which "a return to global splendors might compensate." Further, "life has not been much fun for the bright, ambitious woman who dreamed of being co-President [so] a little adulation might lift her spirits." To top it all off for the distressed McGrory, Hillary "writes a column that has not caught on."

What's to be said when Grandma goes off the deep end? Blinded by adoration, Ms. McGrory is hopelessly oblivious to the fact that neither Hillary Clinton's adulation needs nor her fun quotient is high on the list of the citizenry's concerns. As a professional writer, however, Mary McGrory surely understands why Mrs. Clinton's column has not "caught on": it isn't any good. This single honest observation might, in turn, help Ms. McGrory understand why Hillary's "bright, ambitious" plan to be co-President never caught on either: it was a really lousy idea.

Having read Hillary Clinton's columns, along with many of her major speeches of the last three years—having read, that is, her organized premeditations, what she *wanted* said—I have concluded that for Mrs. Clinton, language, like many other things, possesses no intrinsic beauty or integrity—and therefore imposes no obligations on its use—but is merely a tool to advance a higher cause. It isn't a means of communication but a vehicle for manipulation.

The First Lady uses language in order to obscure. In her column, whose intended audience is "average" Americans and whose purpose is to "warm" Mrs. Clinton's image, her use of language obscures the fact that she is saying, essentially, nothing. In her speeches to political and professional groups, her means are the same but her intent is the opposite: words, awkward torrents of them, are used to veil ideas whose meaning is either incoherent or preposterous.

Let us consider first her newspaper column. It is, in a word, awful: shallow, insipid, badly written. Last September, ninth-graders all across the country wrote "summer vacation" essays that were more scintillating than Mrs. Clinton's offering on the topic. "I will always remember," she wrote of a magical trip during her college years, "the wonder I felt touring the lake country in England, wandering through Paris and exploring the great monuments and museums in Italy." Lest her status be forgotten, however, Mrs. Clinton inserted into her vacation reveries of "long games of pinochle, swimming, fishing . . . and walks" a more recent recollection: "I remember once explaining to German Chancellor Helmut Kohl that we were hoping to get a few days off later in the year. He was going to spend a

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Janet Scott Barlow writes from Cincinnati.

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rejuvenating month in the forest." Were Mrs. Clinton less intent on name-dropping (*Look Grandma—global splendors*!) and more concerned with communicating, she might realize that the image of Helmut Kohl rejuvenating in the forest is one that many of us would just as soon skip.

Hillary Clinton followed her vacation memories with columns devoted to her conviction that American women should exercise their right to vote; her observation that life in Mongolia is hard; her conclusion that being First Lady is nice but difficult—or difficult but nice. She also wrote a commentary on her belief that the United Nations World Conference on Women in Beijing would make the "world a better place by helping women live up to their God-given potential at home, in school, on the job, in their communities and as mothers, wives, learners, workers and citizens"—an extremely *large* assertion when you think about it, one she repeated several times in different ways, avoiding each time any explanation of how such a task might be accomplished.

I cannot imagine who would publish Hillary Clinton's musings were she not First Lady; and I can't imagine who is interested in them even if she is. And it is this, the column's complete, almost deliberate lack of quality—more than its patronizing tone, more than its contradictory agenda (*Think of me as someone just like you, only special*)—that is such an affront. Does she think her readers don't deserve better? Or is this actually the best this "bright, ambitious" woman can do?

My guess is that it's actually the best this bright, ambitious, overrated woman can do. Mrs. Clinton's stated rationale for writing a column is her hope that it will "prompt all of us to think more about the human dimension of our lives." I have no idea what "the human dimension of our lives" means. But what rankles is that she apparently wrote it without asking—without grasping that she was obliged to ask—if *she* knows what it means. Like her husband, Mrs. Clinton appears to have spent so many years adapting her personality in the service of political calculation that political calculation has *become* her personality. Together, the Clintons present America with a relatively new political persona (a legacy of the 1960's, I think): the authentic phony.

Meaning—her search for it in her life, the search by others for it in her words—is a theme that follows Hillary Clinton, as a reading of her speeches illustrates. (Whether Mrs. Clinton personally writes her speeches, or her newspaper column for that matter, seems irrelevant, because everything that has appeared under her name since she became First Lady has the same lumpish shape, the same I'm-smart-so-I-don't-have-to-make-sense presumption, the same I-mean-well-therefore-I-do-well tone as the commencement address she delivered to her fellow Wellesley graduates in 1969. Speechwriters or not, these are *her* choices.)

In her speeches on politics and public policy, one of Mrs. Clinton's most frequently used words is *should*, as in "we should insist . . . we should require . . . we should always . . . we should never." Rarely do any illustrations follow as to how, precisely, "we" can accomplish what *should* be done. Confusing declarations with revelations, Mrs. Clinton seems to think it enough to state what ought to be, and seems, further, to believe that verbal smog such as "meet challenges," "do our part," and "welcome change" is not only original but inspiring.

But the most important thing we *should* be doing, what Hillary Clinton herself is busy doing always, is remolding, as in "remolding society"; reconstruction, as in "reconstruction of civil society"; and, above all, defining and then redefining. Mrs. Clinton obviously believes that if you keep defining and redefining yourself, your government, your institutions, your responsibilities, and your values, you eventually find, well, meaning. Thus we should all "play a role in redefining what our lives should be." We must "define our institutional and personal responsibilities in ways that answer [our] lack of meaning." We should create "a society that fills us up again and makes us feel we are a part of something bigger than ourselves." And we should "figure out how to make our institutions more responsive to the kinds of human beings we wish to be."

> The First Lady uses language in order to obscure. In her column, whose intended audience is 'average' Americans and whose purpose is to 'warm' Mrs. Clinton's image, her use of language obscures the fact that she is saying, essentially, nothing.

Busily projecting her problems onto the rest of America ("All of us face a crisis of meaning"), Mrs. Clinton is eluded in her mist of self-generated complexities by the obvious: to the degree that you are free to redefine at will, you *lose* meaning. Emotionally and philosophically, not to mention practicably, she comes at things backwards. "Society" does not "fill us up" and never has; it doesn't create a state of individual emptiness or fulfillment, it reflects it. We cannot "make our institutions more responsive to the kinds of human beings we wish to be," but we can become the kinds of human beings we wish to be and expect our institutions to respond. We do not find meaning by redefining; we find it by ceasing to redefine. Hillary Clinton mistakes the means for the ends. She confuses the tools with the task. It's as if she decided to dig a hole in order to find a shovel. No wonder she isn't having any "fun."

Since Mrs. Clinton's mental methods result in repeated public displays of clumsy intellection, the question becomes, why does she cling so stubbornly to them? Wade deeper into her speeches, and her motive becomes apparent, along with some astonishing conclusions. In her famous "Politics of Meaning" speech, delivered in Austin, Texas, in 1993, she made many remarks that were discussed and analyzed, applauded or ridiculed. One statement that was generally overlooked, the most revealing, it seems to me, and surely the most stunning, was that people in this country must begin to "see other people

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as they wish to be seen." I'm not sure whether Mrs. Clinton was saying that we should perceive others in the way we ourselves wish to be perceived, or that we should perceive others in the way they themselves wish to be perceived; but either way, it is a perversion of the Golden Rule into nothing less than thought control.

This idea—that we have a right to be seen as we want to be seen—runs through Hillary Clinton's public commentary like an emotional itch, and it doesn't take much to figure out why. She often expresses frustration verging on resentment over the reality that her view of herself is, well, just one woman's opinion (not counting Grandma, of course). In her first newspaper column, she wrote, "it is hard even for me to recognize the Hillary Clinton that other people see." She might have changed "even for me" to "especially for me," as she obviously considers the mere fact of dissenting opinions to be a transgression.

It has become clear over the past three years that Hillary Clinton's fixation on definition and redefinition is rooted in a messy mix of personal entitlement and political expediency. Definitions determine rights, and rights result in control. Hence it no doubt seems to her only fair to conclude that it ought to be a matter of public decency that she be understood, and a matter of public policy that she define understanding. The only thing left out of this neat little noose of circular thinking is the incidental issue of what the *rest of us* get to do.

Mary McGrory and other members of the Hillary Fan Club insult the public and do women a disservice when they blame resistance to Hillary Clinton on "changing roles," "cultural transition," or, worst of all, sexism. Hillary Clinton is not unpopular because Americans dislike "strong women"; she is unpopular because she is an imitation of a strong woman. Dressed in the cheesy robes of derivative status, waving the dinky scepter of power-by-proximity, she stands before a free country and tells people what they should do. She insists on controlling the rules of debate and the definition of terms. Then she reproaches her audience for dimness—or, when she's really cranked up, for "cynicism"—when they conclude that her behavior is arrogant and her ideas nonsensical. She isn't a victim of sexism. She's an illustration of psychological denial.

What strikes me first and most about both Clintons is their failure at personal collectedness, their absence of psychic composure. *All effort shows, always.* Hillary Clinton has taken on, in sweaty liberal fashion, no less a task than the redefinition of human nature, and has done it for no greater reason than to increase her comfort level in the world. And all she needs in return for her efforts is (back to Ms. McGrory) "a little adulation." From a behavioral as well as philosophical standpoint, this is an unattractive spectacle. From a political perspective, however, it is the equivalent of poking the electorate in the eye, then blaming the wounded for screaming *ouch*. Their anger twice justified, their outrage compounded, they dare you to poke them again. And before you know it, they go into a voting booth and say, "Redefine *this*." Better brace yourself, Grandma.

c

Ronda 1994

by Gloria Whelan

The rocky hills furbished with rosemary
and false jasmine,
the shimmering village white hot
to the touch,
the shepherd's cellular phone, and his goats
trotting beside him,
the women in black, a cortege of shadows
darkening the streets,
the church once a mosque, the Mater Dolorosa
the Wounds of the Christ,
the room in the bullring with steel hooks
for the slaughtered toros,
the news drifting in with the swallows
at dawn and at dusk,
a man killed by terrorists in Barcelona, another man
murdered in Madrid,
the deaths that start in the cities and hurry
over the hills to the town.

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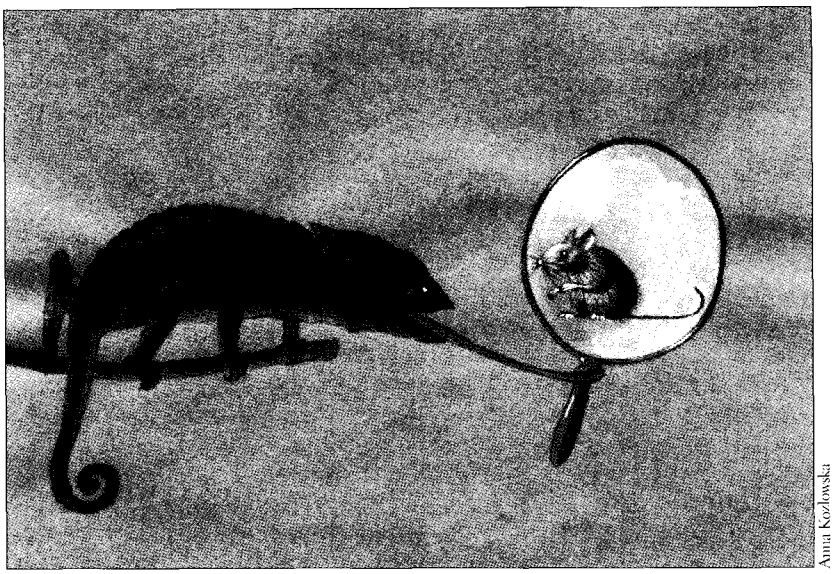
Shadowmetrics

by Robert Weissberg



Anna Kozlowska

The public opinion poll has become an ubiquitous feature of modern life. Seventy years ago, there were no professional pollsters. Fifty years ago only a handful—Gallup, Roper—served as takers of the public pulse. Today, thanks to computer and telephone technology, thousands of public opinion seers and sages are for hire. The explosion of practitioners is only the most visible change. More important is the poll's new authority and legitimacy. With its esoteric technical terms, data banks staffed by skilled technicians, complex statistical procedures, and close associations with prestigious academic and business enterprises, it is scientifically authoritative.

Even if this were insufficient, polling is fully cloaked in democratic legitimacy—democracy means heeding the people, and what better way to give an ear than through the poll? All political persuasions embrace it. Predictably, such an available and powerful tool is relentlessly applied. No self-respecting official, candidate for office, government agency, opposition group, or mass media purveyor can afford to be without one. To say that the modern poll has become the scientifically sanctioned, consensually celebrated form of self-revelation and self-understanding is no exaggeration. When the *vox populi* speaks through the pollster, as it always seems to be doing, everyone listens reverently.

A few still hold out against this mechanical peephole into the public mind. These nonbelievers still prefer their insights the old-fashioned way—semi-rambling conversations with bartenders, cabbies, and barbers (not hair stylists). To them, the whole bean-counting endeavor is beyond salvation; it is pointless even to read the polls.

But such Luddites are rare. Far more common are the uneasy skeptics, those who occasionally sneak a peek, especially when findings confirm intuition, but who cannot truly believe. Deep down, the endless parade of cold numbers makes them nervous. Their resistance to conversion is vague, ambivalent, not rooted in a hard-data countervision or principle. They cannot decide whether polls offer passing curiosities, harmless entertainment akin to "Ripley's Believe It or Not," or whether they capture some sliver of reality.

We address a simple question: leaving aside dishonesty and technical incompetence, can the skeptic generally accept polls? Our answer is also simple: polls occasionally reveal a modest portion of reality, at best. It is not that people consciously lie, though some do. Nor is it that the head counters are schemers exploiting science, though some are. Rather, the polling process by nature cannot present a full, well-rounded picture; a murky virtual reality is more like it. Polling may be compared to a particular hand tool—it does a few jobs well, other tasks adequately, but you cannot build a house with a screwdriver.

What polls can build is public opinion. At a minimum, the term "public opinion" predates by two centuries the modern poll. "Opinion of the people" appeared in England as early as 1741; *esprit public* and *conscience publique* emerged in late 18th-century French writings. The absence of survey technology did not, of course, preclude discovering public sentiment. Opinion was displayed in newspapers, polemical writings, speeches, crowd reactions, public demonstrations, and numerous other visible manifestations. Visiting the local coffeehouse, salon, or *Tischgesellschaften* might suffice. Periodically, public opinion was self-evident, as, for example, when an angry mob dispatched the tax collector. When the public spoke, it did so without pollster midwives.

Today, matters are vastly different. Benjamin Ginsberg's *The Captive Public* depicts how these spontaneous revelations of popular sentiment are now crowded out by the more authoritative scientific poll. To fathom the public's mind on, say, taxes, one collects available poll data or commissions one's own statistics. These data, not irate letters to the editor, calls to radio talk shows, organizational activity, magazine readership, or widespread tax avoidance, comprise public opinion. All else is inferior merchandise, the stuff cherished by the preindustrial

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Luddites. Scientific numbers defeat informed acrimonious public debate and activity.

The consequences of this shift are profound. Simply put, no public opinion exists without it being collected and displayed. The poll, not what people say among themselves, is public opinion; it is manufactured, not spontaneously revealed. The priestly Oracle attendants look suspiciously like ventriloquists. Citizens could be thinking about mass insurrection, but this sentiment cannot "exist" unless captured by the poll. Why use force to silence citizens when it is easier to manipulate poll questions? For example, almost since the advent of polling, people have been endlessly queried about taxes, usually about whether they are too high. Questions addressing the system's very structure—the federal income tax and mandatory withholding, for example—remain unasked. Obviously, poll maestros do not judge such questions as worthy of investigation.

The way polling shapes public opinion goes beyond the nature of the questions asked. Control is pervasive, including interpreting the final results. Even when information is collected, distribution and publicity are not required. A survey revealing that most whites believe blacks to be genetically inferior could be hidden away for "future use." Conversely, matters of modest interest can be raised up to the level of "public concern" simply by including questions on a widely distributed survey. For example, between 1973 and 1989, the National Opinion Research Center asked 11 questions on homosexuality. Other survey organizations likewise discovered homosexuality. These fresh data thus interjected a new item into the soup of public opinion. Suddenly, the public had views on the subject that could be criticized, celebrated, or even followed.

"Public opinion" now more closely reflects commercial considerations or academic fashions, not necessarily what citizens rate critical. Remember, public views are now manufactured, not spontaneous, and this production is not performed *pro bono* by disinterested altruistic philosopher kings. Nor do the local folk finance polls from bake sale proceeds. Polling is an expensive product that, ultimately, must be sold—to the media as news or to those who sponsor large-scale research, especially government funding agencies. Given what we know about elite agendas, a certain tone is to be expected. Polls tell us a great deal about resistance to busing; less about what happens in racially integrated schools. Perhaps poll sponsors do not want to hear about this. Questions regarding more government services and regulation almost always make "benefits" highly tempting. Remember, no questions, no public opinion, and he who controls the poll, controls public opinion.

Public opinion is always measured using samples. Experts agree that a sample of about 1,500 randomly selected, physically dispersed people will, in a statistical sense, "represent" a larger population. It is an atomistic view of society: public opinion is simply a collection of individual opinions. The possibility that public opinion *must* emerge from collective deliberation, that it also may be a property of groups and interests, is definitionally impossible. The modern poll rests on a vision of mass society. But, leaving aside this unease, how is "public" defined in public opinion? Not statistically, but substantively.

This question, an issue of momentous political consequences to our communal self-definition, is seldom addressed. Resolution is by the technical, mechanical dictates of sampling: any conscript claiming to be over 18 becomes officially enrolled in our public. "The public" is, *de facto*, identical to "the sample."

This modern, convenient, and indiscriminate approach departs from tradition. Previously, inclusion in "the public" required some connection to the agenda. A connection might be rooted in self-interest, involvement in events, legal status, position in society, expertise, or any other quality authorizing participation. Demarcation lines were not necessarily precise or strictly followed, but somewhere a division between legitimate participants and outsiders existed. Gate-crashers would be ignored, no matter how noisy. Today, of course, the club of public opinion, like preapproved MasterCard applications, accepts anyone who breathes. If, per chance, the pollster approached illegal immigrants awaiting deportation, he could freely enlist them as bona fide members of the American public. Unless specified in the questionnaire itself, their responses regarding extending citizenship and benefits to noncitizens are valid. This point was driven home to me when my 13-year-old son was telephoned by *Newsweek* for its final 1994 preelection poll. Identifying himself as a 24-year-old, he waxed eloquent on national affairs.

This porous, unreflective definition of "the public" raises several troubling issues. For example, do we welcome those incapable of offering reasoned opinions? Taken together, these would-be pontificators are a significant slice of humanity: alcoholics, drug addicts, the senile, the retarded, the severely mentally ill, recluses, the gravely disabled, and others constituting the public in body only. Should we take seriously advice from incarcerated felons, guest workers, foreign students, and visiting tourists? Must pollsters reach out to those wholly within ethnic enclaves lacking fluency in English? There are no rules in the polling industry. Critical interpretations of political community are almost casually determined by cost, convenience, and the easy availability of respondents. You take who is available.

What is troubling here is not the remote possibility that pollsters may stumble into Bedlam seeking guidance on nuclear deterrence. What is far more common in the typical semiconscious sweep of census tracts and phone numbers are recruits whose contributions are, essentially, irrelevant. Some initiative was once required to join the public—one might, for example, have to defend one's view in public, demonstrate knowledge, or risk one's reputation. Obvious fools could be ignored. A degree of responsibility was thus imposed—the admission ticket was standing and contribution. Today, of course, enrollment is passive and anonymous—the pollster comes and gets you. A substantive connection, stake, or even interest in the issue is assumed, rarely demonstrated. The reality is that most people, most of the time, have no business offering snap judgments on complex, distant matters that are none of their business. What authorizes the average citizen to speculate on intervention in Bosnia or wetlands policy? Such counsel, given without fear of rebuke, easily becomes irresponsible. The "right" to participate in public debate is granted solely by geographical location—those who happen to fall into the sampling frame. If the typical sample were physically assembled for a good public debate, many, no doubt, would be hushed up or asked to leave. They had no legitimate business there. But, when converted into statistics, their voices become authoritative.

Indeed, genuine contributors may disproportionately opt out of the polling process. Being thoughtful souls, they find the typical simpleminded poll question a waste of time. If they do respond, all the careful qualifications, asides, and other insights wind up on the cutting room floor as detailed answers are com-

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pacted into "yes" and "no" boxes. As in the selection of jurors, the process is biased towards the unsophisticated at leisure. A republic of not-too-busy TV watchers.

Clearly, even the most ardent defenders of polling acknowledge a degree of untruth in their product. Surely people lie, especially on sensitive matters, and surely surveys occasionally employ ill-defined terms that elicit nonsense. Questions omit relevant alternatives, dramatic events distort reactions, and bumbling interviewers garble responses. Furthermore, results are sometimes distorted by unrepresentative samples, clerical errors, or even outright falsification. This is all openly confessed, though dismissed as nonfatal. Let us not dwell on these familiar weaknesses; our concerns run deeper.

In the real world, misjudgments and misperceptions are costly. While market research polls better get it right or heads will roll, this is not true when assessing what citizens want from government. Even more important, there are few incentives to get it right. If concocted results were placed next to the genuine article, how could we distinguish the gold from the base metal? There is no standard "truth bar" in some Bureau of Opinion, and here lies the problem. When a *New York Times* survey reports that 75 percent of the public want less defense spending, and the Platonically correct figure is 49 percent, does anyone lose his job? Are pollsters panicked that the public will lose confidence in the pay-per-view Oracles? Of course not—nobody (fortunately?) has the Platonic figure. We have assertions of accuracy buttressed by scientific paraphernalia, not public tests.

In general, tests of poll accuracy on matters of public preference are exceedingly rare. Perhaps the only example is the preelection poll. This test, however, is somewhat limited. Voting, unlike policy, has a concrete meaning to respondents, while the threat of accountability permits pollsters to take precautions such as larger samples and multiple questions. Even when predictions miss, escaping responsibility is not difficult. There are always last-minute disturbances, "understandable" limitations of technique, and other excuses. In especially difficult situations, pollsters announce "too close to call."

The very nature of polling offers few incentives for getting closer. All survey organizations, whether small campaign shops or university-connected colossi, are constrained by costs. Improving accuracy is very expensive—intensive interviewer training, numerous pretests, multiple questions, and other quality control steps inflate costs. And one can still never be sure. Why should the market—the mass media, politicians, or academics—pay handsomely for this enhanced quality? A better poll question is not the same thing as buying a Lexus versus a Chevrolet. In short, there is no demand for the better product.

Perhaps the most serious and enduring impediment to accuracy is that nobody can tell the difference, at least for questions about political preference. We are shooting at an invisible target. There are no full-page ads in the *Wall Street Journal* proclaiming that, for the fifth year in a row, Gallup has been certified to have the most accurate polls. Accuracy will come only when we have a clear standard of true sentiment, and this is likely to be never.

The modern poll assumes that the people have something intelligent to say. Otherwise, why ask? Among both commercial pollsters and academics, this must be judged The Supreme Article of Faith. To challenge it attacks the very foundations of the enterprise. Occasional stupidities will be dutifully acknowledged, commented upon, picked apart in print, and everybody can then return to work as if nothing happened. The problem is deeper than acknowledged, however.

The typical survey's very design conspires to maintain the faith. Basically, it is a highly structured arrangement that could transform even noises from the brain dead into valid data. Merely by answering "yes" or "no," citizens "resolve" the most complex, troublesome problems. It is assumed that by simply reacting, respondents know of what they speak. For example, one common type of question is, "Would you increase/decrease/or keep the same spending on policy X (defense, social security, environmental protection, etc.)." Despite studies demonstrating vast ignorance of government spending, the respondent's knowledge is never assessed. Hence, Mr. X, unknown to the pollster, believes we currently spend $800 billion on defense and advocates a "decrease" to bring it down to a mere $500 billion. Meanwhile, Mrs. Y is certain that the present figure is $200 billion and wants an "increase" to $300 billion. Finally, Mr. Z is well-informed of the facts, including the difficulty of precisely labeling "military spending," and favors a marvelous plan of both cuts and increases. He reluctantly answers, "Don't Know." The headline declares "Public Divided on Defense Cuts."

Simpleminded questionnaires mask the public's inability to navigate difficult choices, especially when large numbers and rare events are involved. Only occasionally does collective silliness expose itself. For example, respondents in one survey expressed a willingness to impose a $10 tax on Westerners to save 50,000 birds in an oil spill. This is $2,000 per bird! This is peanuts compared to the $32 *billion* a year wanted to preserve the whopping crane and $244 million to prevent a single offshore oil spill. But, public generosity does have its limits. Polls on willingness to pay for government-sponsored health care show most Americans supportive only if it was an incredibly cheap bargain, well below $2,000 per year. Lucky birds.

Such examples do not reflect a stupid citizenry. They merely reveal that polls can easily overreach the public's capacity to resolve complex problems. When the issue is familiar and close-at-hand—for example, the use of racial quotas in schools, fear of crime, public morality—people can respond with a degree of thoughtfulness. But when the poll ventures into far more complicated, distant, and unusual matters, responses become less meaningful. What is most unfortunate is that polls, *by their very design*, do not permit a differentiation of the two. By their format, wording, and vagueness, questionnaires disguise irresponsible, thoughtless responses. Discovering reality is replaced by shadowmetrics. People can be irresponsible and indulge their fantasies. The same citizen who refuses a beggar a dollar gladly confesses to a pollster a willingness to spend millions abolishing poverty. The latter response is the "real" one. Unfortunately, since polling is a commercial enterprise, there are no industry incentives to doubt the marketed product's value.

In the end, perhaps some deep psychological need governs our obsession with polling: our compulsive craving for self-understanding whets our appetites for the equivalent of scientific junk food. But when confronted with junk food, the prudent will either consume in moderation or exercise restraint. When people possess firsthand familiarity with issues, polls may reveal something of value; they will render unto the public what is within the proper realm of public competence. Otherwise, be careful. c

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Cry, the Beloved Country

by Alex N. Dragnich

Anna Kozlowska

The Yugoslav civil war will turn out to be, from the long perspective of the American experience, a mere dot on the horizon. But for a small part of the American landscape—the Americans of Serbian descent—the twisted portrayal of this war, by politicians and the media, will be painful and difficult to bear for a long time to come.

As a Kansas mother and public schoolteacher and her husband were listening to the morning TV news, which made reference to "bombing the Serbs," they were interrupted by their three-year-old who asked: "Will it be safe for me to go outside to play?" The mother was of Serbian ancestry (although not the father), and the child took the threat personally. In the Chicago area, students of Serbian ethnic background were told by their teachers that they would not call on them until "their people" stopped doing those terrible things in Europe. An old man in New Jersey who immigrated from Serbia searched in vain for a support group or a legal defense fund to help him deal with anti-Serb taunts. And those Americans of Serbian background who have sought assistance from the American Red Cross in sending relief supplies to needy persons in Serbia have routinely received the cold shoulder. There is no end to such examples.

The media and the American political leadership have succeeded in poisoning the attitudes of Americans toward Serbs and Serbia to such an extent that it has embittered Americans of Serbian descent. The parroting of insidious Serb-bashing by teachers and study guides, including publications for students that deal with current events, means that the indoctrination has reached young unsuspecting minds in the schools. Students whose mothers are Serbian but not the fathers have been able to hide their ancestry, but children whose father's name gives them away are on the front line of a propaganda war. Of course, the anti-Serbian diatribes have also found their echo in businesses and places of employment, and even social and religious settings.

One example of the school scene is the World Newsmap for the week of August 31, 1992, distributed to schools by the Weekly Reader Corporation. It features "Bosnia under Siege," with anti-Serb allegations, such as "Serb troops invaded Bosnia," engaged in "a campaign of terror," and that some of their "actions remind people of Nazi brutality." Then, under the title "What Would You Do?" there is a listing of suggested strategies, among them "bombing military and other targets in Serbia." Moreover, students were asked what would they do if they were the victims of brutality, and alternative actions were posed for them: "Would you leave?" or "Would you try to fight the Serbs?" No hint whatsoever of a civil war.

The Time Education Program for September 14, 1992, titled "Current Events Curriculum: Reading and Writing Skills Curriculum," while referring to the Bosnian civil war, asks the students: "Besides the whole slogan of 'ethnic cleansing,' what other Serbian policies are frighteningly reminiscent of the Nazis?" And "how is the response of the outside world different or similar to reactions to early Nazi policies against the Jews?"

The Teachers' Edition of Scholastic Update for March 25, 1994, has several articles dealing with Bosnia, among them "Why Should We Care?" Among other things, the Serbs are blamed for the Market massacre in Sarajevo in February 1994, with no reference to the fact that United Nations investigations had failed to identify the culprit or culprits. The article speaks of Bosnia as "one of the worst examples of genocide in modern

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times." Another article asserts: "This time, a horrified world community responded. Led by the United States, Western nations issued a stark warning to the Serbs." While there are references to all sides committing atrocities, over and over again there are assertions that the Serbs were the main culprits. There are repetitions of the charge that 200,000 persons had been killed and that two million people were driven from their homes, suggesting that it was the Serbs who did it.

At the end of the Teachers' Edition are three exercises for students. One is a "Pop Quiz" which seeks to determine if the students had grasped the anti-Serb allegations. Another is a "Puzzle Page" with a crossword puzzle where several of the words to be filled in identify Serbs as the guilty party. Finally, there are six questions to respond to, one being "Write a brief note to one of the teenagers in which you describe your reaction to their experience in Bosnia."

With respect to the figures on fatalities listed above, even Patrick Buchanan, no friend of the Serbs, has pointed out the logical absurdity of the claim that 200,000 were killed, by calculating how many would have been killed per day since the war began. And George Kenney, who in 1992 resigned from the State Department to protest American policy in Yugoslavia, wrote in the *New York Times Magazine* of April 23, 1995, that those figures were phony, that the more correct number of fatalities—from all sides—was between 25,000 and 60,000. But media reports pay no attention and continue repeating the inflated figures.

An example of anti-Serb actions at the neighborhood level was the circulation in Naperville, Illinois, of a petition by students of Central High School, which urged people to write to President Clinton, Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chairman Claiborne Pell, and to Illinois Senators Paul Simon and Carol Moseley-Braun. The texts of the suggested letters urged the lifting "of the Arms Embargo against the government of Bosnia immediately to enable them to defend themselves. Nothing short of this will halt the Serbian offensive, massacre of innocent children and rape of women." These petitions were circulated as a class assignment! At least one of the students circulating the petitions was a Muslim.

As a consequence of these actions, Americans of Serbian background, especially vulnerable young ones, who once prided themselves as descendants of the heroic Serbs who fought as our allies in two world wars, have been driven to deny their Serbian ancestry. Some are cowed, not unlike Jews in a number of countries where the sins of society were laid at their feet. Americans of Serbian descent who once prided themselves as Orthodox Christians have been silenced by the media portrayal of their religious beliefs as backward and even barbaric. Moreover, these Americans wonder why certain American politicians (some openly and others tacitly) support Muslims in opposition to the Christian Serbs. Many of these Americans who once pointed with pride to their contributions to America now avoid mentioning their ancestry. Among these are inventors such as Nikola Tesla and Michael Pupin; sculptors such as David Brein; business tycoons such as William Salatich, William Jovanovich, Milan Puskar, and Milan Panic; politicians such as Governor George Voinovich (Ohio), Rose Ann Vuich (first woman state senator in California), and Congresswoman Helen Delich Bentley (Maryland); Pulitzer prizewinners Charles Simic (poetry) and Walter Bogdanich (journalism); artists such as Stephen Stepanchev (poet), Karl Malden (actor), and Steven Tesich (screenwriter); as well as scientists, educators, and community leaders, too numerous to mention.

From another viewpoint, there is nothing about Americans of Serbian background that any one of them needs to be ashamed of; there are no crime syndicates associated with Serbian names. Serbs who came to these shores and their offspring have an excellent record as law-abiding citizens. The only time when some of them were guilty of breaking the law was during Prohibition, but in that respect they had a lot of company with Americans of other ancestries.

Americans of Serbian background have been especially proud of their service in the American Armed Forces, and particularly of those among them who were decorated with Congressional Medals of Honor, such as Mitchell Page (Pajich) and Alex (Jake) Mandusich in World War I; Louis Cukela (Djukelich), the only person in American history to win two Congressional Medals (World War I and World War II and recommended for a third); and Lance Sijan (posthumously) in the Vietnam War. And there are a large number of Purple Heart recipients. Now, Americans of Serbian background are made to feel shame to such an extent that they suffer in silence when they think of the accomplishments of their ethnic kin who served this country.

Americans of Serbian background have been proud, not only of the fact that Serbia fought on the side of the Allies in the two world wars, but also of the Serbs' heroic battles against the Ottoman Turks for the resurrection of their homeland. And they were most proud of the fact that by the beginning of the 20th century, the Serbs had established a democratic parliamentary political system. This was at a time when battlers for democracy in Germany and Austria-Hungary were having little success, and those in Russia and other Eastern European countries could only dream.

American Serbs were also proud that in World War I, little Serbia was able to hold off the vastly superior forces of the Austro-Hungarian Empire for over a year, making a significant contribution to the victory of her Western Allies. In World War II, when most of Europe was under the Nazi heel, Serbian generals in the Yugoslav army in March 1941 said "No" to Hitler at the height of his power. The Axis, however, soon crushed the Yugoslav forces, and Croats set up a pro-German state, which declared war on the Allied powers. Moreover, Germany's Croat minions massacred hundreds of thousands of Serbs, as well as thousands of Jews and Gypsies in their realm. They were joined in many of these massacres by the Muslims of Bosnia-Herzegovina, which was made part of the Croat satellite state. These Muslims, under the leadership of the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem, also formed military divisions to fight on the side of the Axis.

But the Serbs were not cowed, and in July 1941 they raised the first flag of underground resistance in Europe, under the command of a little-known colonel, Draža Mihailović (subsequently promoted to general by the Yugoslav government-in-exile). Immediately, he and his brave Chetniks were hailed as heroes, and Mihailović was on the cover of *Time* magazine on May 25, 1942. American Serbs were elated. Within two years, however, British prime minister Winston Churchill made what he later admitted was his worst mistake of the war, abandoning Mihailović and throwing the West's support to the Yugoslav communists, who had launched a separate resistance movement known as the Partisans. Later it became evident that the communists were primarily interested in seizing power in Yu-

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goslavia, which they succeeded in doing.

The abandonment of Mihailović was a hard blow to Americans of Serbian descent, one which they could not understand, especially given the known antidemocratic position of international communism. In fact, they were not told until the 1960's that in March 1948 President Truman had posthumously awarded Mihailović the Legion of Merit, but at the insistence of the State Department it was kept secret, on the grounds that the news might injure our relations with communist dictator Josip Broz Tito.

When after the war, the Yugoslav communists, under Tito's leadership, organized the new Yugoslavia on the pattern of the Soviet Union, the Serbs were punished by scattering a third of them among other ethnic units, called republics. American Serbs could only say, "We told you so." While Tito's regime included Serbian communists, who remained loyal to the party leader, Tito (Croat-Slovene) and his close associates from Slovenia and Croatia were firmly in control. After the breakup of Yugoslavia in 1992, Americans of Serbian ancestry found themselves pilloried when they spoke up in defense of their kin in areas of the country where civil war raged. By that time, the Croats and Slovenes had astutely engaged public relations firms for "spin control," publicizing the notion that their secessions were justified as opposition to the desire of the Serbs to dominate them: a clearly spurious charge, but one which the American media spread widely and the public swallowed uncritically. This helps to explain the West's hasty recognition of the secessionist republics and the push to accept them as new members of the United Nations.

Neither the media, nor the supposedly independent journalists, and certainly no important political leaders, took note of the fact that the Western actions totally ignored the interests of our once much-touted allies, the Serbs. And those same great powers seemingly took no note of how their future interests in the Balkans would be affected by the role that the Serbs would eventually play.

Americans of Serbian ancestry have been deeply concerned about the widespread satanization of Serbs and Serbia by the politicians and by the media and have asked themselves what the Serbs have done to deserve the vilification. They believe the Serbs have acted in the time-honored tradition of fighting for their rights, a concept occupying a high place in the pyramid of American political iconography. In this case, however, the Serbs' determination to fight for their rights met with the equal determination of the West to force them to accept a detestable outcome in the wake of the disintegration of Yugoslavia.

The Serbs, the only group among the South Slavs who were allies of France, Britain, Russia, and the United States in two world wars, expected understanding if not support. Moreover, these countries, as well as Yugoslavia, were signatories of the Helsinki Accords, which proclaimed that changing internationally recognized boundaries by force was unacceptable. But these countries forgot their obligations, and joined Germany, Serbia's enemy in two world wars, in aiding and abetting the secessionist republics, first of all Slovenia and Croatia, in changing Yugoslavia's boundaries by armed force. And there is no indication that these same powers were aware that they were violating the Montevideo Convention of 1932, which stipulated the conditions for recognizing new states, conditions that Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina did not meet.

While there were few Serbs in Slovenia, there were nearly three-quarters of a million in Croatia and about 1.5 million in Bosnia-Herzegovina, which followed Slovenia and Croatia in seceding. These Serbs, constituting about one-third of the Ser-

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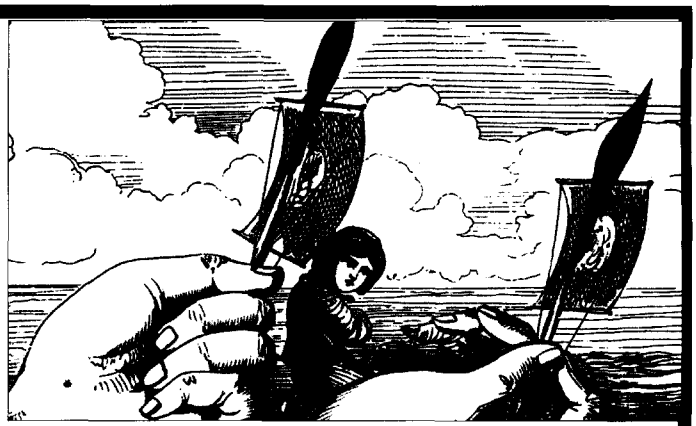

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bian population of Yugoslavia, had lived together in one state since 1918 and believed that they had a right to remain a part of Yugoslavia. Or, if not, they believed that they had a right to create their own mini-states on territories that they have inhabited for centuries. After all, they thought, if self-determination was right for the secessionists, why not the Serbs?

What puzzled some Americans (and not only those of Serbian descent) was the West's attitude, which on the one hand welcomed the fall of communist systems but on the other fought doggedly to internationalize the communist Tito's administrative internal borders, which punished the Serbs. This was particularly relevant in the case of Bosnia-Herzegovina, where the Serbs constituted one-third of the population. Moreover, the leader of the Muslims, Alija Izetbegović, plainly stated in his book *The Islamic Declaration* that there "can be neither peace nor coexistence between the Islamic religion and non-Islamic social and political institutions." Moreover, he wrote: "The upbringing of the people, and particularly means of mass influence—the press, radio, television and film—should be in the hands of people whose Islamic moral and intellectual authority is indisputable. The media should not be allowed—as so often happens—to fall into the hands of perverted and degenerate people who then transmit the aimlessness and emptiness of their own lives to others."

Clearly, this view was contrary to the Bosnian Muslims' claim that they favored a multiethnic state. But American political leaders and the American media, presumably great defenders of pluralism, seemed not to notice and continued with their pro-Muslim and anti-Serb declarations.

Understandably, Americans of Serbian background were greatly troubled by the reports of various atrocities in Bosnia, which the media ascribed to Serbs. They realized that in wars, especially civil wars—including the American Civil War—all sides commit atrocities. And according to United Nations observers and some private relief agencies, this was also true in Bosnia, but the American media paid scant attention, choosing instead to continue vilifying only the Serbs. Newspapers often failed to identify Serb victims or Serbian graves in published pictures, leaving the impression that the graves were those of Muslims or Croats. American political leaders and the media then attributed the three main outrages in Sarajevo to the Serbs, when to this day no credible evidence against the Serbs has been produced, and much to the contrary. These were the so-called "breadline" massacre of May 1992, the explosion in the Markale market in February 1994, and a similar explosion in August 1995. The first prompted the Western powers to have the Security Council of the United Nations vote for severe economic sanctions against rump Yugoslavia, meaning Serbia and Montenegro. The second one was used to force Bosnian Serbs to pull their heavy weapons some 20 kilometers away from Sarajevo and to tighten the sanctions against Yugoslavia. The third was used as a pretext for the massive bombing campaign against the Bosnian Serbs.

Of the first, the U.N. commander in Sarajevo, General Lewis MacKenzie, has provided information that suggests that the Muslims were the more likely culprits. The same point was made by the London newspaper, *The Independent*. Of the second, the U.N. office in New York reported that based on their reports from Sarajevo, it was impossible to tell who was responsible. Experts from Israel have thrown serious doubts on allegations that the Serbs were the villains. A Turkish doctor at a Sarajevo hospital pointed to the nature of victims' wounds that threw doubts on the allegations of those who had said that it was a Serbian shell. Independent journalists who have seen the confidential U.N. reports have concluded that indeed it was impossible to place responsibility, while at the same time hinting that Muslims—domestic or foreign, and perhaps not under the command of the Bosnian Muslim authorities—were liable. French television was more forthright in blaming the Muslims. Some reports even hinted that it may have been a device accidentally exploded by Muslims. Of the explosion last August, independent investigations have concluded that the Serbs were *not* and could *not* have been responsible.

> The parroting of insidious Serb-bashing by teachers and study guides, including publications for students that deal with current events, means that the indoctrination has reached young unsuspecting minds in the schools.

Consequently, Americans of Serbian descent are bewildered by the indifference of Western leaders to the evidence and the facts and by the relentless Serb-bashing of the Western media. One of the worst excesses occurred when the media publicized a statement from an unnamed FBI source who claimed that the Serbs were suspects in the World Trade Center bombing. Yet the arrest of members of an Islamic terrorist ring brought no apology to Serbs.

Older Americans can recall how Americans of German descent suffered because of the indiscriminate German-bashing during World War I. We need to remind ourselves, however, that at that time there was no radio or television, and no newspapers for students to spread the venom. Ironically, the Serb-bashing came at the very time when we were apologizing for the way Japanese-Americans were treated in World War II. And we are not even at war with Serbia!

A large number of Americans of Serbian heritage have written letters and articles to national newspapers and magazines, as well as those in their respective communities, seeking outlets for the truth. Most of them were met with silence, although some were published, especially letters to the editor. Some Serbian-American organizations have placed ads, some full-page ones, in a few leading newspapers. A few American scholars and journalists with no ethnic ties to Serbia but who know the Yugoslav case well have written similar messages, usually with the same results.

But the truth does trickle out. Peter Brock, a political writer

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for the El Paso *Herald-Post*, has traveled to Bosnia and surrounding areas and written a number of informative, objective reports. He has also written two lengthy articles for magazines specializing in foreign affairs, detailing the anti-Serb bias of the media, and he is currently writing a book on the civil war. Moreover, David Binder of the *New York Times* has written several factual reports that reflect favorably on the Serbs, only to see them suppressed by his own paper. Fortunately, some of the spiked articles have been published elsewhere. Several objective articles have also found their way into nonmainstream magazines, including *Chronicles*.

Some British and French journalists have also issued unbiased reports. At least one French correspondent, Jacques Merlino, has written a book showing how the reality of the Yugoslav conflict is not being told truthfully. A British journalist noted parenthetically in May 1995 that if the Serbs "were openly boasting about offensives under preparation, the massed ranks of the international media would be crying foul. But the response is muted when the Bosnian government trashes its solemn commitments to the international community."

Moreover, the media defame the Serbs for violating the so-called safe havens, but fail to point out that the Muslims have used these havens as staging areas for military attacks on the Serbs. Additionally, the media, far from vilifying the Croats when they destroyed the historic bridge at Mostar or condemning the Muslims when they smashed the monument to Nobel Laureate Ivo Andrić at Visegrad, paid scant attention. In May 1995, when Croatia launched a massive assault against the Serbs in the "U.N.-protected" area of Western Slavonia, the international community uttered a mild rebuke. Also in May, when the Bosnian Muslims broke the ceasefire (previously brokered by former President Carter) and the Bosnian Serbs shot back, NATO launched air strikes against the Serbs. And last August, when Croatian troops overran another "United Nations protected" zone (Krajina) and carried out the largest "ethnic cleansing" of the whole Yugoslav conflict, there was no condemnation by the United States. To the utter disbelief of Americans of Serbian background, the Clinton administration viewed it as an improved opportunity for peace. To this day, United Nations reports continue to be filed on the mass killing of Serbs who refused to flee and on the Croatians who destroyed and stole Serbian property (buildings, livestock, and even dogs).

What has puzzled Americans of Serbian ancestry, but also many other informed Americans, is that while President Clinton has at different times referred to the conflict as a civil war, and has even said that the United States is not taking sides, concrete acts of his administration have consistently favored the Muslims. The most vivid actions were American aircraft dropping bombs and launching Cruise Missiles against Bosnian Serb targets in September 1995, leading one American officer to observe that the Americans had become the Muslim Air Force. And as indicated above, our assistance to the Croats has been such that even Croatian cabinet ministers publicly took pride in American help.

To an extent, Americans of Serbian background have seen some support for their position by the admissions of former Secretary of State James Baker and former French President François Mitterrand: that Western policies toward the Yugoslav crisis were not only in error but even contributed to the tragedy. Baker recalled that his original position was right, that the United States should have taken up the question of recognizing secessionist Yugoslav republics only *after* they had reached political settlements. He has pointed out that the unilateral declarations of secession by Slovenia and Croatia, and the use of force to accomplish them, was in violation of the Helsinki Accords, acts which precluded peaceful negotiations and consequently led to a vicious civil war. Be it noted that Baker is the only major American political leader involved in the Yugoslav policy to have made such an admission. There was also some satisfaction in President Jimmy Carter's assertion that the Bosnian Serb side of the story had not been told in the American media. Similarly, in a newspaper interview in September 1994, Mitterrand revealed that he had originally opposed the hasty recognition of the secessionist republics; he asserted that he could see no justification for converting communist Tito's administrative internal borders into international ones.

In the United States, however, hatred of the Serbs seems to continue undiminished. In fact, last year the United States discovered a new way to fight the Serbs—suspending the Social Security checks of Americans currently living in Serbia or Montenegro. The checks are to be held at the American Embassy in Belgrade until the sanctions are lifted, when many of these retirees may be dead.

Most Americans of Serbian descent accept what they see with a certain fatalism, and ascribe it to stupidity. At the same time, they are distraught because they are unable to detect a more believable explanation. They wonder why TV anchors and other journalists keep repeating the same misinformation, even when mistakes are pointed out to them. And they are bothered by failures to make corrections or to offer apologies. Moreover, they see a certain irony in the sameness of the anti-Serb bashing, as if it were directed by a central propaganda office, reminiscent of Agitprop (office of agitation and propaganda) in communist states.

There is an awareness among these Americans that Europe's great powers, including their supposed friend, Russia, "sold out" the Serbs. They argue that what policymakers in the West fail to understand is that, given this background, the Serbs are reluctant to be anyone's satellite. The Serbs may like certain foreign nations, but they do not want to be under the thumb of any one of them. They want to deal with all countries openly, equally, and freely. They want to be the sole judges of what is right and proper for them, while respecting similar rights for others.

Some Americans of Serbian descent are inclined to say, "Cry, beloved country, for the demonizing of your historic friends and allies, and for the shame and pain that your actions have caused to their descendants in our midst," but they are also heartened by South Africa's Alan Paton, who saw that the dawn would come to dispel the darkness and end the bondage of heartless cruelty and immoral injustice.

In the end, however, what these Americans, and especially those who came as immigrants, have most in common is their concern about the moral image of America. They know that the Serbs never viewed the United States as cold and heartless, the way that they looked upon Britain, Russia, and other great powers. Somehow Americans were different. They were a beacon of hope—of fairness and justice. But American policymakers have recently tarnished this image, and Americans of Serbian ancestry wonder why. Most important of all, they wonder whether America's tattered reputation can ever be repaired, the wounds ever healed.

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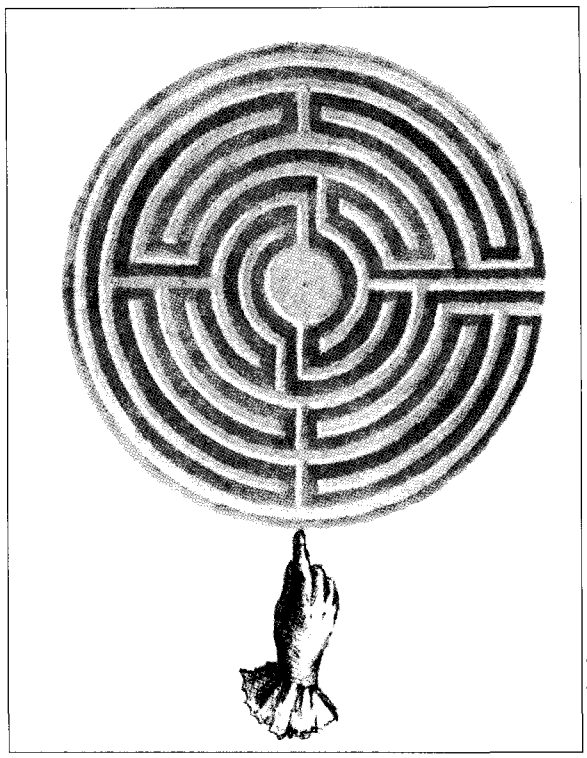
Government and the Press

by Jeremy Black



Anna Kozlowska

In comparison with its modern rivals, capitalism is the most attractive form of socioeconomic organization for conservatives. Capitalism has moved the democratization of society in a conservative direction, because at the same time that the differing wealth and income of individuals ensures that their purchasing power varies, each is a consumer able to make his or her own purchasing decisions. This element of choice and the need to shape and cater to it have helped to lead to a major shift in political culture, so that in modern Britain, unlike during the late 1940's, there is now little confidence in central planning and state collectivism. Capitalist pressures and possibilities have changed society, leading to a major expansion of the middle class. The percentage of the labor force composed of manual workers fell from 75 in 1900 to 47 by 1974 and 36 in 1991. A capitalist, consumerist, individualist, mobile, predominantly secular and urban, property-owning democracy developed in Britain, and society was far more atomistic than its predecessors. The young, determined not to be younger copies of their elders, were more willing to try different foods, to holiday in different places, to move away from parental religious preferences, to go on to higher education or to purchase property.

Many conservatives, disturbed by these shifts, seek to blame capitalism for the secularism and collapse of deference that worry them. In Britain, a major battle was fought in the late 1980's and early 90's between those who supported shopping on Sundays and those who wished to restrict it. Some conservatives condemn advertising in general and the Americanization inspired by capitalist concerns such as McDonald's. Yet, the alternative to capitalism is a controlled economy, either ostensibly socialist or socialist in its methods and assumptions, and such a situation is not in the interest of conservatives, especially if they are of a democratic bent.

The modern press, indeed the media in general, takes an important role in this debate. There is a long tradition of unease among conservatives about the liberal traditions of the press, one that has not been assuaged by its capitalist rationale. Partly, there is disquiet about the extent to which news and opinion are both commodities, a situation that unsettles those who like to see them in terms of immutable truths. Partly, there is grave concern about the influence of the media and the possibility that opportunities for the dissemination of news and opinion will be controlled, deliberately or otherwise, in a hostile fashion.

Yet, again, it is first necessary to look at the alternatives. A central feature of a country with a capitalist press is that newspapers have had to compete with each other; the alternative, a formally or informally controlled press, is far less attractive to democrats. The capitalist press is best understood in a competitive light, though at present there is a worrying tendency toward monopoly positions for commercial, rather than ideological, reasons.

Newspapers have also had to compete with other means of conveying news. These means can essentially be divided into two types. First, there have been other capitalist agencies, both those involving the culture of print, such as magazines, and, more recently, those using different technology, such as radio and television. In contrast, there are the far less readily grasped noninstitutional and noncapitalist agencies for formulating and

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disseminating news. These can essentially be described as community agencies: families, kindred, localities, confessional and economic groups.

> The capitalist press is best understood in a competitive light, though at present there is a worrying tendency toward monopoly positions for commercial, rather than ideological, reasons.

The relationship between the two is obviously not one of simple competition. Community agencies can serve for the assessment and transmission of news received from elsewhere through the first type of agencies. And yet, there is and was a basic tension. Though local communities can influence, through their values, the impact of the news from external agencies on the local recipients of it, they play a more limited role than in the creation and discussion of local issues—local being understood as a specific group and not necessarily a geographical term. In contrast, external agencies mediate between localities and the outside world, in particular creating or sustaining expectations, hopes, and interests that are not those of the locality. External agencies therefore offered and offer a source and means for independence, individualism, and, on at least the local level, democratization. Knowledge is not so much freedom, but rather a cause of the demand for freedoms.

Early modern England was, in its practice and ideology, by modern standards, inegalitarian, religious, hierarchical, paternalistic, patriarchal, male-dominated, and both reverential of and referential to the past. The culture of print represented a potential threat to this cultural, social, and political order and threatened directly the religious sphere. The printing of vernacular Bibles had given concerned individuals an opportunity to consider God themselves and to defy traditional teachings from the zealous perspective of scriptural authority.

The modern religious world in both America and Britain is in large part a product of the collapse of monopoly control over the dissemination of the Christian message and the accompanying decline in ecclesiastical authority. This can be, and is, assessed in different ways by conservatives—a Catholic will have a different view from a Protestant's—an indication of the folly of assuming that conservatives will necessarily share the same positions.

Scholars have focused on the political and social, rather than the cultural, implications of the press. Politics was a sphere of activity that suited the technology of print with its capability for producing new stories rapidly. The press could make politics if not immediate at least diurnal by publishing fresh accounts, offering new angles on current controversies and creating new issues.

This encouraged political pressure, a process facilitated by the opportunities of using the legal system to harass opposition papers and by the willingness of governments to subsidize favorable papers. The former was most successful in the 1710's and early 1720's and again in the 1790's. The government campaign against the Jacobite press during this period was reasonably effective. Of the six Jacobite papers listed in *Thursday's Journal* in October 1719, only two remained three years later. Jacobite newspapermen, such as George Flint and Nathanael Mist, fled to France to avoid fresh spells in Newgate prison. In 1746, the newly launched Jacobite *National Journal* ended when the printer was removed to London's Newgate. The French Revolution led to new activity. *The Argus*, a paper that had defended such radicals as Tom Paine and was content to link its fortune "to the Revolution of France," was ended when its printer Sampson Perry fled to France to avoid trial for libel. The presses were used for the *True Briton*, launched with government sponsorship in 1793. The printers of the *Manchester Herald* and the *Sheffield Register* fled abroad to avoid trial in 1793 and 1794, and their papers came to an end. A threatened government prosecution led to the end of the *Leicester Chronicle* in 1792. James Montgomery, the conductor of the radical *Sheffield Iris*, was imprisoned for political libels in 1795 and 1796. In 1799, compulsory registration of printing presses was introduced.

Government payments to the press in the 18th century varied, but in the early 1730's, Sir Robert Walpole's ministry was probably spending about 20,000 pounds annually, slightly more than the annual cost of an infantry regiment. When in retirement, Lord North, Prime Minister 1770-82, told the French Ambassador that he had never seen a British government strong enough to be able to ignore what was said in print, and that it was necessary for ministries to reply to printed criticism, failing which they would swiftly become unpopular.

Aside from money, government could also provide other inducements, some of which are familiar today. Ministerial newspapers could hope to receive advertisements from departments of government, assistance at the Post Office, and benefits to other aspects of their business. An active searcher of government patronage, John Walter of the *Daily Universal Register*, which later became the *Times*, was appointed printer to the Customs Office in 1787, after failing to obtain the profitable printing contract for the Stationery Office. News was also provided. Samuel Buckley sought to obtain for the *Daily Courant* "such foreign news as is proper to be printed; this indulgence would add much to the circulation of a paper calculated and carried on entirely for public benefit." Thomas Bradshaw, who as Secretary of the Treasury had played a role in ministerial propaganda, claimed in 1773 that "a newspaper can never be supported without the insertion now and then of a secret."

The situation today is in some respects more serious, although the means by which governments can use formal legal restraints to coerce the press are far weaker in most countries in the "free world." Precisely because of regulatory devices, many of them designed to control what have been seen as the excesses of capitalism, the possibility is now stronger for close rela-

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tions between parts of the media and government or political parties, most obviously in France and Italy. Unfortunately, technological developments and the efforts to create multimedia empires only encourage regulatory supervision and government interference.

The media are undergoing centralization, not least because it is financially easier to make money by arranging mergers and creating quasi-monopolies, rather than by creating and investing in new concerns. Yet, the relentless pace of new technology and the extent to which so much of it is amenable to individual use threatens to subvert any corporate structures based on current technology, while the porosity of international frontiers to foreign transmission also weakens both monopoly control and regulatory regimes, as can be seen clearly in Europe and possibly will be increasingly seen in North and Latin America.

For conservatives the situation is a challenging one, but any uniform response is unlikely because of the ambiguous and differing approaches to issues of regulation and to the ideology and practice of unrestrained capitalism. Furthermore, the regulatory context not only differs but affects conservatives differently because of the histories of their respective countries. American conservatives have had less experience of powerful state control than their counterparts in Europe, and the threat of socialism is less of an issue in America. Equally, many American and British conservatives find it hard to understand the degree to which in much of Continental Europe conservatives struggle to control, not to dismantle, state concerns and regulatory institutions. In France, Italy, and Germany, state control is not identified with socialism.

Whatever our doubts and concerns, the modern situation in America and Britain is certainly better than one in which the state simply controls the media in the name of the people. Yet, there are also many reasons to avoid complacency. Much of the rubbish circulated in various branches of the media demonstrates both a lack of standards and an obsession with political correctness.

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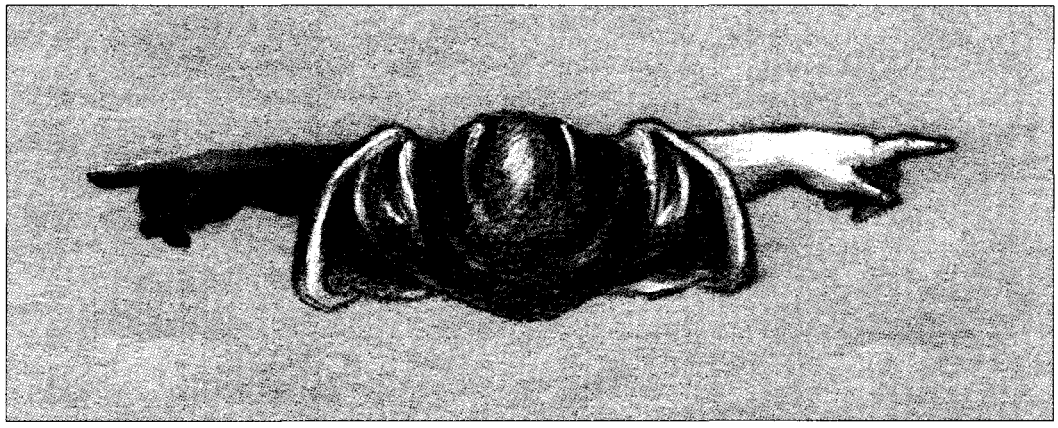
The Nationalist Imperative

by Wayne Allensworth

"Nationalism is an infantile disease. It is the measles of mankind."
—Albert Einstein



Anna Korlowska

Ethnonationalism: The Quest for Understanding
by Walker Connor
Princeton: Princeton University Press;
226 pp., $14.95

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When James Bowie took his considerable reputation as a brawler and duelist, along with the famous knife his brother Resin had fashioned for him, to Mexico, married the daughter of the vice-governor of the province of Texas, and became a respected citizen of that republic, he would have considered it pure hogwash had someone suggested that he had ceased to be an American. Bowie, like most Americans of the first half of the 19th century, did not think of his Americanness as a mutable quality, it being something as unquestioned, and as unreflected upon, as the stages of the moon or the points of the compass. It had nothing to do with either politics *per se*, or legalistic notions of civic membership. He was an American by language, culture, and worldview, as well as by all those qualities, including the way a people walk and talk, that set them apart from all others. He was an Anglo-Celtic adventurer, tall with fair skin, red hair, and blue-gray eyes, who could mix easily with either the best of Southern gentility or the toughest of frontier roughnecks, an example of a particular type that the Mexicans would learn to fear and hate.

This is not to say that Bowie was not, at least for a time, a loyal citizen of his adopted country. He was lord and master of thousands of acres of Texas lands, wealthy and apolitical. His troubles with Mexico, the ones that brought about his violent death a scant three years later, began following the deaths of his wife and two young children in the great cholera epidemic of 1833. Bowie had little contact with the American colonists of Texas before that, but now—as the foremost bard of Texas's heroic age, T.R. Fehrenbach, wrote in his narrative history *cum* folk epic *Lone Star*—"blood called to blood," and the legendary frontiersman "drifted into the Revolution."

Bowie was not alone in thinking the colonists' rebellion his own: Cincinnati, Ohio, supplied the rebels with the "Twin Sisters," a pair of field cannon that Sam Houston deployed in the final showdown with Santa Anna at San Jacinto; New Orleans supplied the Texans with a volunteer contingent, the New Orleans Grays; and Stephen F. Austin, the great empresario of Texas colonization, went to the United States, hoping to rouse the people of Kentucky and Tennessee to the American cause in Texas. They responded as he had hoped they would, bringing their vaunted long rifles, as well as their natural love of a good scrap, with them. William Barrot Travis, commander of the garrison at the Alamo after Bowie fell ill, saw nothing strange in addressing his famous letter of February 24, 1836—both a call to arms and a statement of defiant intent to fight to the last man—to the "people of Texas and All Americans in the World." True to his word, Travis died there together with Bowie and Davy Crockett (himself born in the "State of Franklin"), and 180-odd comrades-in-arms, on March 6, four days after the Republic of Texas had been declared.

The fact that none of these men perceived a particularly strong connection between formal citizenship and their personal and collective identities as Americans is bound to be puzzling to many citizens of the modern American multicultural state. The America that they belonged to was not something that many of us would recognize as such. The spacious, seemingly endless leagues of territory that stretched before them to the Pacific stirred the American imagination with mythical tales of Eldorado just over the next rise. The inevitable march of the Americans to unsettled areas itself worked against a purely territorial sense of Americanness, and their

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sense of particular identity was sharpened by the confrontation of white and red men on the violent edge of the American states. As is so often the case, the clash with the "other" helped to fuse the Christian, English-speaking, northern European communities along the Atlantic seaboard and beyond into a nation, a nation that would remain the vital core of what we now call "America."

The events surrounding the Texas revolution took place some 30-odd years before most modern observers, including many political scientists, developmental theorists, and sociologists would venture to say that an American nation, fully developed or nascent, was in any way present on the North American continent. A minority would differ; and here, in the clash between "modernists" and "primordialists," lies the essence of the conflict over the study of nationalism.

For the primordialist, nationalism is an extension of "primordial" family, clan, and tribal ties to a larger group. Nations, large groups of people who are conscious of such a bond, existed long before nationalism as an ideology developed in the 18th century. The ancient Egyptians, Hebrews, Greeks, and Romans all possessed a sense of identity, uniqueness, and destiny that closely resembled the self-defining characteristics of modern nations. They also conducted wars, made treaties, collected tribute and taxes, composed epics about their ancestors, formed religious cults, and liberated "their" lands from foreigners. They told mythic tales of their nation's founding, of Romulus and Remus, Abraham and Moses, never doubting that Providence had selected them for special tasks. Nationalism, then, is a natural, though not inevitable, development of the kinship tie.

The "modernist" views this claim as so much sentimental claptrap, and asserts that nations are a unique development of the modern age, a product of structural transformations in early modern Europe's economic, political, and social superstructure. New commercial relationships demanded both the destruction of the old order and the creation of new social bonds in place of the old communal ones. Industrialism demanded a more mobile and fluid population. The centralized bureaucratic state would serve both purposes well: state-sponsored intellectuals would dream up "national" mythologies, and centralized educational systems would standardize language and homogenize regional cultures, making Germans out of Bavarians and Prussians, Frenchmen out of Normans and Gascons.

The modernists claim that a system of homogenization developed that more or less made people interchangeable parts in the vast machine of the industrialized world. Their economic and structural determinism strongly influenced developmental theorists, who saw "nation-building" as a route to modernity for the developing world, and the "nation-builders" accepted the modernists' determinism as a justification for their own universalist tendencies. Liberals or socialists for the most part, the "nation-builders" saw no reason why, if nations are completely artificial products of economic, political, and social structural changes, a "world nation" might not be in mankind's future. "Nation-building" was a "progressive" development for the Second and Third Worlds, but the First World, where the whole modernist project had originated, had already—or so it seemed to them—transcended the "national" phase, forming the core of the developing New World Order.

The fly in the universalists' ointment is that such utopian dreams are not supported by real world observation, and the party pooper who seems to have done the most homework on the subject is Walker Connor of Connecticut's Trinity College. *Ethnonationalism* synthesizes some 30 years of Connor's research into nationalist movements in various parts of the world, work that leads him to some very disheartening (for "nation-builders" and other universalists) conclusions. Connor asserts, among other things, that the "age of nationalism" is far from over, that multinational states are likely to suffer severe nationalist conflicts in the next century, and that attempted assimilation of disparate national groups by "immigrant states" is a very shaky proposition.

By contrasting "the literature on political development with *actual political developments*," Connor concludes that "structuralist" sociologists have grossly overestimated the power of economic growth to overcome particular identities, while grossly underestimating the strength and resilience of those identities. Overall improvements in the standard of living have not, for instance, curtailed the growth of black nationalism in America, nor has the prospect of economic dislocation prevented Slovaks and Ukrainians from forming their own states. Of course, economic disparities *can* provide some national groups with a useful tool in a propaganda battle (hence the popularity of Marxism with various post-World War II "national liberation" movements), but nationalism appears to "operate remarkably independent from the economic variable."

According to Connor, there are two problems that have led interpreters of nationalist phenomena down false trails. First, many influential scholars (Karl Deutsch appears to have done the most damage) have confused the situation by employing the language of "nation-building" (they mean state-building) in studying nationalist phenomena. If "nation-building" means state-building, then "nation" means state; "nation-state" means a centralized industrial state (Connor calls them "integrated states"); "patriotism" means loyalty to the state; a "citizen" of a "nation" is a formal member of a legalistic polity; and "nationalism" is merely a form of modernist political ideology. Modernists and "nation-builders" have discounted the "ethnic" factor in state-building projects, and have become confused—again by fuzzy language—about what, exactly, they are talking. In Sub-Saharan Africa, for instance, a nation is called a "tribe," and "nation-builders" tend to speak of "race" as an entirely separate ingredient of the socioeconomic "national" soup. Primordialists and modernists have simply been talking about two different phenomena, one that is related to human kinship and another that is not a state of consciousness or being but a process of social organization.

Connor clears the air by offering a more precise definition of "nation"; a nation, he says, is the largest group that imagines itself to be ancestrally related (thus his preference for the term "ethnonationalism"). National identity, since it is an extension of kinship (real or imagined), will trump all others in a test of loyalties. It is largely an internalized psychological state that does not depend on the maintenance of external factors alone—such as language, religion, or race—and that can survive the loss of many of those external boundaries between "us" and "them." The Irish, for example, who are physically indistinguishable from other inhabitants of the British Isles, have lost their language, but Irish identity thrives. Indeed, over 40

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percent of those who responded to one survey conducted in Northern Ireland called themselves "Irish," while the largest remaining group of respondents chose to identify themselves as "British," or "Ulstermen." Since those who call themselves "Irish" appear to be the same people who identify with Catholicism, and the "Ulstermen" those who are—nominally at least—Protestant, Connor asserts that many analysts, confused by modernist assumptions, tend to concentrate on the symptoms of nationalist conflict rather than on the real causes.

Thus, the conflict in Northern Ireland is assumed to be a religious one between "Catholics" and "Protestants" (despite the Marxism of some of the "Catholic" militants), and not one between Irishmen and Ulstermen. Both groups are erroneously assumed to share a common sense of "Irish" nationality. If only religion would go away, many liberals reason, all would be well in Belfast. Field research, however, supports Connor's conclusions: as long as any external factors remain, however tenuous; as long as any memory of historical clashes is alive, however mythologized; as long as these peoples perceive themselves to be different, with different interests and loyalties, the war between the "Catholics" and the "Prods" will continue. They are two nations occupying—and having a claim to—the same territory, and all the wishful thinking in the world cannot change that truth about the conflict. This confusion of symptoms and causes, produced by foggy terminology, accounts for the tendency of analysts of all stripes to underestimate the psychological power of national identity. This error contributes to the second problem in nationalist interpretation, the problem of false assumptions.

When the modernist or "nation-builder" position is adopted uncritically, as it often is by scholars and political elites, then a whole set of erroneous assumptions about political, economic, and social development inevitably follows. The "universal nation" and "opportunity society" so beloved by both Hillary Clinton liberals and Newt Gingrich conservatives are not mere slogans dreamed up by Jack Kemp while he showered with black football players, but are, rather, part and parcel of the ideological freight that the modernist engine carries in tow. Like Lenin in his sealed train, it is a plague bacillus, an organism that infects the body politic after having been carried deep into enemy territory, often under a false flag.

Connor attacks the assumptions produced by this infection head on. Modernization, according to him, *does not* weaken "ethnic" identity among minorities in a multinational state. It does tend to homogenize like groups, such as Northerners and Southerners in America, but it only increases the national consciousness of Mexicans, Chinese, and other nationalities by highlighting their "otherness" through increased frequency and duration of contact with the dominant group. Contrary to modernists' assumptions, the more unlike groups come into contact with one another, the *less* they can abide each other's company. Any effort to homogenize unlike groups by force or design is likely to backfire. In Spain, Franco's efforts to eradicate Basque, Catalan, and Galician consciousness "seems only to have magnified them," and the same could be said of Soviet efforts to "Russify" Ukrainians, Tartars, Estonians, and Chechens. This observation has particular importance because few "nation-states"—states that are coterminous with a particular nation—actually exist. Most states are binational or multinational, and First World states, already feeling the strain of ethnic friction, will probably fail completely to assimilate Third World immigrants in large numbers. The new immigrants are comprised of national groups from Asia, Africa, and Latin America who, because of their vastly divergent external badges of identity (boundary markers that do so much to perpetuate internal consciousness) cannot credibly be anything besides the "other" when contrasted with the majority of Americans.

This illusion of the homogenizing power of modern societies is based on the historical viability of multinational states, in the form of kingdoms and empires, prior to the "age of nationalism." In many cases, these premodern polities remained stable for centuries. This convinces developmental theorists that "tribalism," "racism," and "separatism" must be infantile disorders associated with the "nation-building" phase of modernization, and proper indoctrination in "human rights" and "democracy" are the cure. What this view ignores is the structural changes in economic, political, and social organization (not to mention ideology, in particular the notion of self-determination and its bastard cousin, multiculturalism) that have made rule by aliens so onerous in the modern era. Disparate national groups were able to live together, more or less peacefully, in a single feudal polity because they had few direct contacts with one another. In premodern multinational states, especially those where varying nations were territorially based, the lack of contact tended to prevent clashes of interest, between subject peoples and between the imperial *Staatvolk* and its subjects who lived in their tribal or clan-based villages far from the metropolitan center. Low-tech communications and transportation allowed the local group to live within the framework of familiar folkways; agricultural economies kept most people at work in the regions where they were born. Neither the subject nation's, nor the metropolitan's, cultural survival was threatened by such an arrangement. Modernization has changed all that, and the New World Order of trans-state government and trans-state corporations now threatens both First World and Third with national degradation. Neither history nor the "age of nationalism" has reached its end, and those political elites who think it has are a danger to the societies they rule.

Connor's work challenges not only the feeble nostrums of the universalist left but the hopes of many on the traditionalist and libertarian right as well. He gives the structuralist devil his due: times and socioeconomic structures have changed, and Connor does not challenge the assumption that modernity—the world of the "integrated state" (James Burnham's "managerial state")—has altered the consciousness of nations. The survival of nations is not questioned; nations have survived, indeed they have flourished as never before, in the modern era, but the conservative's main concern is not simply the physical survival of his people, but *their survival as what*?

The decentralized republic of our forebears was an agrarian one, as economically and socially supportive of the traditionalist philosophy of the early Americans as the feudal social structure was of medieval Christendom. Liberty and tradition thrived in such a world. The question remains whether either can survive, not only in a multicultural America but in the prepackaged, cellophane-wrapped, capitalist America many "conservatives" want to sell us. ◁C

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Paradise Recovered

by Paul Gottfried

The End of Racism: Principles for a Multiracial Society
by Dinesh D'Souza
New York: The Free Press;
724 pp., $30.00

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Mr. D'Souza might have reconsidered the title of his book, for he is not describing the end of racism. Glenn Loury recently observed a predilection for "end" themes in recent neoconservative tracts: Fukuyama with the end of history and D'Souza with the end of racism, Loury explains, have taken Hegelian (or pseudo-Hegelian) phrases to express their private visions. They confer historical inevitability on what they or their patrons would like to see happen. In D'Souza's case, the talk about the end of racism betokens confusion more than wishful thinking.

In both *The End of Racism* and in a *Washington Post* article published on September 24, he depicts a reality at odds with his own happy talk. D'Souza complains about media and academic support of black nationalism and about resurgent scientific racialism on the right. Allowing here for the usual neoconservative hyperbole—namely, that "moderate conservatives" are being threatened by equally sinister forces on the right *and* the left—it seems that racial relations in the United States may be closer to Jared Taylor's portrayal of them in *Paved with Good Intentions* than to D'Souza's vision of racial harmony. Black hostility toward whites has demonstrably increased over the last 20 years, as evidenced by black reactions to the Simpson trial and racially motivated crimes by blacks against whites. On a recent *Crossfire* show, D'Souza stressed the need for interracial marriage as the ultimate solution to America's race problems. By contrast, his opposite number, a black Howard University professor of history, emphasized the right of the black community to maintain its own "group integrity and pride."

Partly, D'Souza means by the "end of racism" that race explains less and less about black underclass failures. Cultural pathologies, according to D'Souza, are at the root of these, and the government has exacerbated them by funding antisocial behavior. Meanwhile, the media have excused black male criminality in particular, and underclass violence in general. Here D'Souza, writing incisively and boldly, has angered his black colleagues at the American Enterprise Institute—including Loury—by speaking about underclass barbarism. And he discusses in grim detail a world he accuses the left of not condemning sufficiently. Noting that most nonintellectuals intuitively understand which people are most likely dangerous, he praises the cab driver who will not pick up young black males after dark.

These observations—or rather clichés—are far from indicating the end of racial hostility. Nor does the mounting evidence in regard to inherited group differences being accumulated by geneticists and statisticians; rather, it suggests the reverse. If social differences correspond to cognitive disparities, and if American blacks (as members of a distinctive gene pool) have significantly less inherited aptitude for abstract thinking than other groups, these facts will have certain probable results. Blacks on average will continue to fall below whites and Asians socioeconomically, and, proportionately, more blacks than members of other races will find themselves at the bottom of a colorblind society—resentful of their fate.

D'Souza does not sufficiently consider this possibility, wanting to have his cake and to eat it too. He cites the research on cognitive disparities in *The Bell Curve* without raising noteworthy methodological objections, and he quotes approvingly Linda Gottfredson's study of Labor Department statistics, which compares the expected level of representation of blacks and whites in various professions, given their cognitive abilities, to their present level of representation. D'Souza seems to believe that all that Gottfredson is demonstrating is that blacks, given their current intellectual achievements, are overrepresented in the professions. Gottfredson believes that the cognitive gap between American blacks and other groups will probably persist. Thus, absent quotas, blacks would be only minimally represented in the most respected and lucrative professions. D'Souza's call for a miscegenated America may be an attempted solution to the tensions such a race-neutral society might release. But it is hard to see how this prescription can be implemented on a massive scale without totalitarian engineering—and without pulling down the cognitive elite.

In regard to the history of racial theory, D'Souza, quoting the great Scottish skeptic and agnostic David Hume who insisted from observations that Negroes are barely human, usefully explains that it was not the Enlightenment but Christianity that mounted the most passionate and persistent crusade against slavery and in favor of the humane treatment of blacks. He might also have mentioned that Hume debated this conclusion with the founder of Methodism, John Wesley; and that Wesley maintained, against the "atheist Enlightenment," that Christians must stand united in their opposition to the enslavement and degradation of Negroes. D'Souza has no trouble lining up representatives of the Age of Reason—including Jefferson, Kant, Voltaire, and Franklin—among those who were convinced of the inherent primitiveness of the black race. He brings to light the well-hidden truth that the Enlightenment created, in addition to liberal politics, scientific racialism. And some of the most persuasive support for segregation in the South, D'Souza observes, came from the left: from social radicals like Tom Watson, and from political Progressives like Woodrow Wilson. D'Souza is methodical in digging up embarrassing facts for contemporary liberals, in particular, the doubtful scientific lineage of environmental social science.

But his presentation also lapses into sloppy error and reckless generalization; the book abounds in misquotations from Jared Taylor and Samuel Francis that are particularly inexcusable given that both authors complained about distortions of their statements which they encountered in the galleys. Most of the Enlightenment figures D'Souza mentions had no social theories at all. Kant and Hegel were merely registering observations

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about the inhabitants of a society more backward than their own, a point that D'Souza first concedes but then ignores. His indignant comments about lynchings in the American South in the early years of the century assume an enormity of wickedness that is not borne out by the facts. Black violence in Southern cities in the 1880's and 1890's approached levels associated with the underclass of today, and was a matter of concern even to the black radical W.E.B. Du Bois. Summary justice was the means of dealing with this problem, and, as Dwight Murphey suggests in *Conservative Review* (Summer 1995), it is hard to demonstrate that most of the executions for murder and rape carried out in the South or elsewhere were motivated primarily by race. Rather, they usually corresponded to the incidence of violent crime among the races, and Murphey adduces documented cases in which Southern courts absolved blacks who had lynched white murderers. Blacks often lynched other blacks in the frontier situation that characterized much of the post-Civil War South, and whites were susceptible to the same vigilante justice. Murphey cites the work of a 60's liberal to show that lynchings in the South were less numerous than one might infer from current historiography. One might cite the same sources against D'Souza's two-page diatribe.

The most troubling generalization in *The End of Racism* is the assertion that the "ancient and early Christian societies of the West cannot be rightly accused of racism." D'Souza qualifies this otherwise puzzling observation by stating that Greeks, Romans, and Christians "made crucial distinctions—between nature and custom, between civilization and barbarism, between salvation and damnation—that would later be invoked to justify racism." While it is true that neither classical antiquity nor medieval Christendom developed any full-blown scientific racialism, this is only a partial truth. Aristotle did believe in inherited ethnic differences between Greeks and barbarians; in his remarks to Alexander the Great regarding the inadvisability of intermarriage between Greeks and Persians, he cites genetic as well as customary differences. His criticism of "conventional slavery," which Straussians and D'Souza read as a veiled call for abolition, is actually an appeal to Hellenic solidarity made in the *Nicomachean Ethics*. Aristotle declaims against the practice of Greeks taking other Greeks as war captives and enslaving them, but barbarians, he believed, were accustomed to despotic control. Both references to barbarians in the *Nicomachean Ethics* stress their physical and moral degeneracy.

It is naive to think that the Greek sense of ethnicity and repugnance toward foreigners was based entirely on cultural pride. Or, that the distinctions drawn between Normans and Anglo-Saxons in 11th-century England, or between Frankish noblemen and Celtic peasants in prerevolutionary France, were free of racialist attitudes. And how does D'Souza explain the Spanish Inquisition, which persecuted Jewish *conversos* for their genealogical shortcomings, as three leading scholars of Spanish Jewry—Americo Castro, M.D. Ortiz, and Benzion Netanyahu—argue? To ascribe this persecution to theological scrupulousness or mere political envy is to overlook the reaction against foreigners and impure blood in 16th-century Spain.

The most glaring error in D'Souza's book, however, is the utopian belief that keeps popping up—amid evidence to the contrary—that ethnic and racial tensions are only a passing phase of human existence. Only bad people, like scientific racialists, anti-Christian skeptics, and black nationalists, have kept this phase from ending in the United States, but the march of history presumably will soon bring about a "multiracial society." I for one shall bet on the continuation of friend-enemy groupings, as opposed to D'Souza's confected paradise. I shall also wager on the persistence of racial and "gender" quotas, a policy that D'Souza believes is ending, unless the American political class is severely shaken. There is no reason for American administrators and judges to notice the popular will, unless it can prevail against them.

A final point: like other neoconservatives, D'Souza divides the civil rights movement into separate phases that do not overlap. This enables him to argue that Jack Kemp "spoke wisely" when he deplored the failure of Republicans to "have been there on the freedom marches and bus rides." D'Souza indicates his own support for such activities, but devotes much of the rest of the book to lamenting the subsequent turns of the civil rights movement. Liberals are right, however, to insist upon the continuity in civil rights leadership and goals—and also the use of incremental strategy in empowering blacks, and the state as their protector. To maintain the illusion of discontinuity in the civil rights program, D'Souza presents two Martin Luther Kings: the good King who advocated a color-blind society, and the bad one, the embittered crusader who by the late 60's was groping toward quotas. But this biographical disjunction is fictitious. King had called for white reparations to blacks by the early 60's, before he proclaimed his "dream" on the Washington march in 1964. And inasmuch as King was a socialist influenced by liberation theology, it is also misleading to associate him with a capitalist meritocracy that he consistently opposed.

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Circumventions and Subversions

by George W. Carey

The New Color Line: How Quotas and Privilege Destroy Democracy
by Paul Craig Roberts and Lawrence M. Stratton
Washington, D.C.: Regnery Publishing; 247 pp., $24.95

The basic concerns of this book go well beyond detailing how the original goals of the civil rights movement have been shamelessly perverted by the courts and bureaucracy. The authors show in some detail how the courts and bureaucracy acting in tandem have endorsed quotas and set asides, policies that now make race and sex "determining factors" in private employment decisions, which is contrary to the plain language and legislative intent of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. But the lasting value of this work relates to its thesis that our civil rights policies involve enormous costs, not the least of which is the total abandonment of the fundamental values and practices of our Western liberal heritage. Viewed from a wider perspective, this book is a case study that points out concretely in the area of civil rights what many Americans sense only vaguely with regard to a wide range of policy concerns:

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the values of our Founding Fathers are being eroded through processes over which there are scarcely any democratic controls.

In detailing this abandonment, the authors rightly stress the centrality of "equality before the law" and the "democratic ideal" to the liberal tradition. With the emergence of "equality before the law," the individual was liberated from the constraints of "birth, privilege, and class" that determined his place and status in the feudal order. For its part, the "democratic ideal" relies on and strives to cultivate the common values that allow for civil discourse, the existence of "goodwill" among citizens that allows for resolution of differences without bitterness, hostility, or the need for government coercion, and, *inter alia*, the acceptance of the majority rule principle for making decisions after due debate and deliberation.

These traditional values, the authors maintain, have been ravaged in the civil rights "crusade" that started in 1954 with the Supreme Court's decision in *Brown v. Board of Education*. Gone now is "equality before the law." In its place we have new categories of privilege, "race, general, and handicapped status," as invidious as those found in feudal times. The "democratic ideal" has suffered perhaps irremediable damage. Our civil rights policies clearly did not result from the consensual processes provided for by our Constitution. Contrary to the basic tenets of traditional liberalism, the authors assert, we find that government today is pitted against society in the area of civil rights on the "premise" that there are "hegemonic discriminatory structures in law and employment that must be broken up by government coercion." Needless to say, given this state of affairs, "goodwill" has long since dissipated in large sectors of society.

The authors' claim that the Court's *Brown* decision was the immediate cause for the depreciation of these values is bound to arouse controversy. But their argument is compelling. "The most important result of *Brown*," they write, "was not the desegregation but the rise of kritarchy; the rule of judges. From Prince Edward County to Yonkers to Kansas City, cities, counties, and states have lost their sovereignty to federal judges who overturn democratic outcomes and usurp the power of the purse." "*Brown*," they continue, "has led a generation of judges to believe that they are the ultimate power, because the Constitution has no meaning other than their subjective feelings about social policy."

The significance of this position with respect to the *Brown* decision should not be lost on conservative critics of judicial activism who, over the years, have had difficulties dealing with this particular case. Briefly put, liberal defenders of judicial activism use the *Brown* decision not only to take the high moral ground, but to point out that the Court must on occasion assume wide-ranging powers to promote "justice," "human dignity," and the like. Moreover, these liberals have managed to confound many conservative critics of an activist judiciary by simply pointing to *Brown* and asking whether the conservatives would have decided the case otherwise. A standard conservative response runs that the holding against segregation is correct, but the rationale used by the Court in support of its decision, relying primarily on sociological and psychological findings, is unsatisfactory because the decision could have been based on the "equal protection" clause of the 14th Amendment. Yet this response has never been satisfactory: to establish a link between the intentions of drafters or ratifiers of the 14th Amendment and the Court's ruling in *Brown* calls for an ingenuity that would do Justice Brennan proud. And, clearly, any such linkage would only legitimize further judicial circumventions of the democratic processes.

One of the more important messages of this book, then, is that whatever good resulted from the *Brown* decision (and it is certainly debatable whether the decision improved or worsened race relations) is far outweighed by the costs to constitutionalism and deliberative self-government. To say the least, the line of argument employed by Roberts and Stratton removes the *Brown* "encumbrance" that has served to hamper conservative critics of kritarchy. Equally significant, pointing to the logical consequences of *Brown* serves to deprive judicial activists of the moral high ground.

They move to an even higher level of analysis by stressing that the *Brown* decision cannot be understood in isolation from its ideological moorings. Its origins, they demonstrate, are to be found in the views advanced by the Swedish socialist Gunnar Myrdal (1898-1987), long an idol of the American liberal community. One theme of Myrdal's widely heralded and enormously influential work, *An American Dilemma* (1944), most relevant to *Brown* was that "American racist impulses were so strong . . . segregation could not be overturned through the democratic process." He concluded that America was "caught in a dilemma between its creed of equality and the reality of segregation." His elitism, sense of moral superiority, and basic distrust of democracy, as Roberts and Stratton show, compelled Myrdal to conclude that the integration of American society could only come about through the efforts of an educated elite, not through the democratic processes provided for in the Constitution. He eventually came to hold that integration could be best achieved through the Supreme Court acting in the "spirit of the Reconstruction Amendments."

Myrdal's message was not lost on the NAACP legal division that devised a strategy to downplay the centrality of original intent and precedent in legal interpretation while extolling the virtues of "legal realism," with emphasis on the need for a sociological approach to jurisprudence. More importantly, Myrdal's teachings apparently had a profound impact on Justice Felix Frankfurter, who went to great lengths to secure a victory for the NAACP and Thurgood Marshall in the *Brown* case. Not only did he maneuver to secure a "two-year delay and subsequent rehearing of the case to overcome Marshall's initial failure before the Court in 1952," during this delay "he conspired with the Solicitor General's office to shape the Justice Department's briefs and oral argument in a manner designed to sway his colleagues on the Court." In these efforts, Frankfurter worked closely with Philip Elman, one of his former clerks, who served on the Solicitor General's staff and "handled all civil rights cases before the Supreme Court in which the United States was involved as either a party or *amicus curiae*." Thus, the authors conclude, "the *Brown* decision was won not only at the expense of the democratic process, but also at the expense of judicial impartiality."

Frankfurter's violation of judicial ethics, clearly vital to the evolution of the present indefensible civil rights policies, is significant for another reason. It reveals the power of ideology cloaked in righteousness that presumes to know what direction society should take; an ideology that should not be underestimated with regard to either its strength

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or prevalence in certain circles. *The New Color Line* points out how even the most basic principles and values undergirding the American constitutional order were corrupted by its own institutions through the stealth and cunning of ideologists motivated by their visions of racial "justice." That this could happen means that something is drastically amiss in our political culture. It also serves to warn us to be ever vigilant: similar "progressive" ideologies that range well beyond civil rights concerns find favor in elite circles, particularly at our more prestigious law schools in their various "critical legal studies" programs.

The final message of *The New Color Line* is perhaps the most important: "Ultimately, either quotas will go or democracy will, because legal privileges based on status are incompatible with democracy's requirement of equal standing before the law." Quite so. But what is not certain is which one will go.

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The Mad Farmer

by N. Alan Cornett

Another Turn of the Crank
by Wendell Berry
Washington, D.C.: Counterpoint;
122 pp., $18.00

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The Luddite tradition that Wendell Berry hails so eloquently is the same, he insists, that caused the men of '76 to break from Britain. It is the Jeffersonian Democratic tradition that was partly destroyed (in both the North and the South) by the War Between the States, and almost wholly wrecked by the one-world fantasies of men like Woodrow Wilson, and the centralizing notions of men like Franklin Delano Roosevelt. In his latest book, Berry proves that the tradition, though too often ignored today, is alive and well. He has been farming and writing in his native Henry County, Kentucky, for 30 years now. He has experienced the glitz of cosmopolitanism at Stanford and New York University, yet he prefers the hills overlooking the Kentucky River to the fashionable academic scene. He prefers his community of Port Royal to virtual communities on the information superhighway. Foremost, Berry prefers truth to the drivel fed to us every day by the purveyors of popular culture.

Berry begins *Another Turn of the Crank* with a strike against rampant globalism. In "Farming and the Global Economy," he reminds us that "the whole population of the world cannot live on imported food." Since World War II, local farming communities have been systematically annihilated, their populations moved to urban centers. The start of this, Berry notes, was the switch from solar energy to an almost complete reliance on fossil fuels. Farmers are not its only victims: so are the consumers of their produce. Cities have watched complacently as food production has become more and more concentrated in a few, often distant areas. Local food production is ignored, and even thought to be unnecessary. Yet it is in the best interest of cities to encourage a vibrant countryside surrounding and supporting them, rather than to rely on food transported from thousands of miles away. In this way, both country and city are bolstered, the origin of the produce known and its quality monitored; also, community can be strengthened.

Berry recognizes that our national political leaders do not have the "local affections and allegiances" that would permit them to understand such concerns. They will be of no help. As Berry writes in "Conserving Communities," "American farmers, who over the years have wondered whether or not they counted, may now put their minds at rest: they do not count." Having destroyed the farming interest, politicians can now ignore them. But reformists should no longer direct their efforts toward convincing men of power that their cause is just: it is on the local level that changes must be made—through the civic groups, conservation groups, and co-ops, as well as, most importantly, through direct consumer choice. As in his last book of essays and in his poem, "The Mad Farmer, Flying the Flag of Rough Branch, Secedes From the Union," Berry urges secession: not formal political secession, but secession from the global economy and a return to our communities. Rather than remaining subservient to the Democratic and Republican parties, to NAFTA and GATT, to Disney and Warner, we need to align ourselves within the new political division that has come to exist between the party that holds that the community has no value, and the other that believes that it does. In the interests of promoting the health of communities, Berry suggests a number of rules for action, including, "Always supply local needs first," and "Make sure that money paid in to a local economy circulates within the community for as long as possible before it is paid out."

Berry addresses the theme of community self-sufficiency in a wonderful essay, "Conserving Forest Communities," where Berry highlights the needs of Eastern Kentucky. What Berry fears, and what Appalachia should fear, is that what happened with coal will happen with timber: outside interests will move in, exploit what is there, and leave, requiring the next generation to cope with the damage created by a boom-and-bust economy. Berry is not a tree-spiker opposed to the harvesting of timber; he is a realist who sees that the needs of Eastern Kentucky will outrun the next 20 years. He regards Kentucky's forest lands as a sustainable resource that can be maintained to support an area indefinitely. Foresting communities should not allow themselves to remain a colonial economy, shipping logs to distant places; instead "People in the local community [should] be employed in forest management, logging, and sawmilling, in a variety of value-added small factories and shops, and in satellite or supporting industries." Berry offers as an example of the practicability of his suggestion the Menominee Indians of Wisconsin. In the 140 years during which they have held their forest reservation, they have cut two billion board feet of timber on a forest currently estimated to contain one and a half-billion board feet. The Indians there do not regard logging as an economy, but as a culture.

Such an economy is impossible without clear concepts of both private property rights and stewardship. In recent years, private property rights have been under assault from the government and from so-called environmentalists. Berry, as a conservationist as well as a private property owner, perceives the dangers in this attack against the private property rights of individuals, and also against stewardship as it is properly understood. In "Private Property and the Common

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Wealth," he argues that in order for land to be properly cared for, it must be privately held in small parcels; the people who are then dependent on that land will do the best job of caring for it. We cannot, Berry says, "get good care in the use of the land by demanding it from public officials." Four hundred and forty thousand private landowners in Kentucky would be "fierce" in their opposition to the restriction of their property rights, and Wendell Berry would be with them in their opposition. He urges in place of the environmentalist vision the Jeffersonian one: a land dotted with small landholders who know their land, depend upon it for their livelihood, and have great affection toward it. This is how the land ought to be protected and used.

In "Health is Membership," Berry quotes Sir Albert Howard and argues that "the whole problem of health in soil, plant, animal, and man [is] one great subject." Typically, Berry takes the broad view: "I believe that the community—in the fullest sense: a place and all its creatures—is the smallest unit of health and that to speak of the health of an isolated individual is a contradiction." Toward a more proper understanding of health, we must distance ourselves from the modern idea of the body as a machine and the mind as a computer. Hospitals exemplify this modern attitude toward health by their constant noise, poor food, and detached staff, as Berry suggests in his account of the events surrounding his brother's recent heart attack. Though Berry acknowledges that the hospital saved his brother's life, he recounts an incident that gives a disturbing insight into the state of modern medicine:

> When John was in intensive care after his surgery, his wife, Carol, was standing by his bed, grieving and afraid. Wanting to reassure her, the nurse said, "Nothing is happening to him that doesn't happen to everybody."
>
> And Carol replied, "I'm not everybody's wife."

As Berry realizes, without a full appreciation of death and love, we can never have a proper understanding of true health.

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Brief Mentions

As I Walked Out One Evening. *By W.H. Auden. Edited by Edward Mendelson (New York: Vintage), 220 pp., $12.00*

W.H. Auden is famous for poems about totalitarian evil, but he also wrote frivolous verse when in the mood. In assembling *As I Walked Out One Evening*, Edward Mendelson, the executor of Auden's estate, sifted through the vast corpus of his work, picking out "lullabies, limericks, and other light verse" (to quote from the front cover). Auden honed his craft with dirges such as "Spain 1937" and "September 1, 1939," but the poems collected here employ short, epigrammatic couplets and acerbic bits of dialogue. Declaring early in the volume that "I hate . . . all authority," Auden ridicules its manifestations in modern life: big business, public education, the military state. Auden's Marxist leanings are evident throughout. In a typical entry, "'Gold in the North' Came the Blizzard to Say," he traces the careers of five young men during the Depression. Typical is the fate of a neophyte stockbroker, who says: "In the streets of New York I was young and swell, / I rode the market, the market fell, / One morning I woke and found myself in hell." Other entries, such as "Refugee Blues" and "James Honeyman," deal with the plight of people who are of no use to the state bureaucracy ("If you've got no passport you're officially dead," a refugee is told). These poems are clever, but the centerpiece of the volume is the "Letter to Lord Byron," a 40-page discourse on politics, sex, Auden's life, and other assorted topics. Auden expounds upon a few of the developments in art and society that followed the Romantic age, praising the advent of modernism and condemning corporate rapacity. Although the poem is politicized—at one point Auden quips, "Today, thank God, we've got no snobbish feeling / Against the more efficient modes of stealing"—he also presents real insights, as in this description of the effects of television and advertising on the public mentality: "We're growing up and up indeed. / Advertisements can teach us all we need; / And death is better, as the millions know, / Than dandruff, night-starvation, or B.O." (If you compare Auden to the political poets of today—June Jordan and Adrienne Rich—his brash Marxism starts to look appealing.) He discusses the emergence of the novel as a form of popular culture and the sudden popularity of innovators like Louis MacNeice and Wyndham Lewis, the "sobering few / . . . trying hard to think of something new." This volume may jolt readers familiar with the serious Auden, but it is an entertaining romp.

—*Michael Washburn*

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by Samuel Francis

Enemies of the State

The Great Republican Revolution took a brief trip to the benches last summer when committees in both House and Senate paused in their deliberations to burrow into the federal atrocities at Waco and Ruby Ridge. The resulting hearings were by no means as much fun as the O.J. Simpson trial, and the House investigation of the Waco massacre in particular was fatally marred by the partisanism that the Republicans who ran it seem incapable of disguising.

Yet the Stupid Party was not unique in its zeal to score political points in the scrutiny of the mass murder of the Branch Davidians in 1993 and the slightly more selective slaughter visited upon the family of Randy Weaver a few months before. Perhaps the lowest point in the Weaver hearings was plumbed when California's Diane Feinstein quizzed Mr. Weaver as to whether he had any swastikas or Nazi armbands in his possession. The clear intent of her question was to suggest that if one does possess such paraphernalia, then it's all right for the FBI to shoot one's wife and son. Mr. Weaver responded by asking if he could go to the bathroom, and who can blame him? The crudity of the question and its purpose ought to make all citizens nauseous.

The hearings on Waco were remarkable chiefly because of their failure even to ask, let alone try to answer, some of the central questions that the ATF's original "dynamic entry" raised, while in the investigation of the Ruby Ridge matter, chairman Arlen Specter ruled out from the first any inquiry into the apparent internal cover-up with which the FBI and the Justice Department tried to hide the decisions that led to the bloodletting. Yet, for all their flaws, blunders, and perhaps even complicity in suppressing the truth about these two infamies, the hearings did exert at least one salutary effect. If nothing else, they seem to have halted the efforts of the Clinton administration, abetted by the Republican leadership, to convert the FBI into a full-fledged American Gestapo.

Not long before the hearings on Waco and Ruby Ridge, the administration's "counterterrorism" legislation, drafted quickly and conveniently in the wake of the April 19 Oklahoma City bombing, slipped easily through the full Senate and the House Judiciary Committee with little opposition. The measures vastly enhanced the power of the FBI to wiretap telephone conversations, enlarged the role of the military forces in law enforcement, increased the "counterterrorist" personnel of the Bureau, and (in the House version) defined as "terrorism" virtually any crime committed with a firearm. Since the Bureau has automatic jurisdiction in all terrorism cases, and since every street mugging from Miami to Milwaukee would suddenly have graduated into a "terrorist incident," the latter provision alone, which merrily passed the Republican-controlled Judiciary Committee by a vote of 23 to 12, would have effectively made the FBI a national police force overriding local and state law enforcement.

Yet, despite the progress of the legislation in Congress, by autumn most lawmakers were beginning to feel as queasy as Mr. Weaver had during his interrogation by Senator Feinstein. In September, House Republican aides were telling the *New York Times* they could not bring the counterterrorism legislation to the floor because they just didn't have the votes, and the reason they didn't, as an official of the ACLU remarked, was that "there is a suspicion about granting the FBI broader powers in light of Waco and Ruby Ridge." The ACLU, in rare conjunction with gun rights groups like the National Rifle Association and the Gun Owners of America, played an important role in stopping the joint march of Republicans and Democrats toward even greater federal power.

But the use of the FBI for swelling the power of the federal leviathan is hardly new, and throughout this century—indeed, ever since the Bureau's establishment under Theodore Roosevelt—that is exactly what the purpose of the Bureau has been. In the age of global war that has preoccupied this country for most of this century, that purpose was effectively hidden, and the good old ground of "national security" served to justify to (or conceal from) many Americans the gradual enlargement of federal police power. Now that the era of international conflict is concluded, however, the close relationship between the FBI and the imperial appetites of the leviathan becomes much more clear. But at the same time, just as national security elites are inventing new foreign enemies to justify further global adventures and the perpetuation of their power, so national law enforcement elites are looking for new rationales to justify the perpetuation and further enlargement of their own.

Despite the legend of the "right-wing" and "anticommunist" character of the FBI under J. Edgar Hoover, the truth is that the Bureau and its functions are almost entirely the offspring of the Progressivist and New Deal ideologies of centralized governmental power and social reconstruction that have served to justify the leviathan state since the early 20th century. Moreover, in the Progressive era under Roosevelt I as well as in the New Deal and Great Society eras of his successors, the Bureau played a major role in the political regimentation of American society and the outright repression of political resistance to the growth of the managerial state.

Roosevelt I created the Bureau of Investigation in 1908 explicitly for the purpose of disciplining political opponents of his federal land laws. In 1905, one such opponent, Senator Charles Fulton of Oregon, complained on the floor of the Senate that enforcement of the laws in his state had led to the incarceration of a good part of Oregon's Republican Party, including his own colleague in the Senate. At that time, federal departments made use of the Secret Service to enforce laws within their jurisdiction, but Congress, alarmed at the repression with which TR visited his Western political rivals, passed a law forbidding the use of Secret Service agents outside the Treasury Department. In an effort to circumvent that law, Roosevelt then ordered his Attorney General, Charles Buonaparte (significantly, perhaps, the nephew of the Emperor Napoleon III), to establish a Bureau of Investigation within the Justice Department to allow him to pursue the enemies of federal restrictions on land use without congressional meddling.

Yet the FBI remained a minor federal

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agency until the New Deal era, when it acquired the legendary status it retained until the 1970's, and the modern FBI is very much a creature of the New Deal. While Coolidge's Attorney General Harlan Fisk Stone had withdrawn the Bureau from the red-hunting that was J. Edgar Hoover's first love, the President who put the FBI back into the domestic security business was Franklin Roosevelt.

Roosevelt II was principally interested in what he regarded as pro-Nazi activities in the 1930's as challenges to his interventionist foreign policy, but also in communist activities, and he demanded from Hoover what a 1936 memorandum called systematic intelligence on "subversive activities in the United States, particularly Fascism and Communism ... a broad picture of the general movement and its activities as may affect the economic and political life of the country."

The memorandum was in fact a mandate for the permeation of all of American society by federal intelligence authorities, but especially for the politically motivated surveillance and intimidation of the critics of Roosevelt's foreign policy. It was one thing for the FBI to investigate actual German-government sponsored political activities in the United States, but, using that as a cover, Roosevelt was able to extend FBI surveillance to non-Nazi domestic dissenters. That Roosevelt had no serious interest in resisting clandestine foreign interference in American politics is shown by his notorious collaboration, in violation of law and the Constitution, with secret British intelligence activities in the United States designed to promote pro-British sentiment and support Roosevelt's foreign policy.

The New Deal, then, was a Great Leap Forward for federal police power as well as for federally mandated investigations of political adversaries. The second such leap took place in the 1960's, when Lyndon Johnson conscripted the Bureau for the blatant political intimidation of Southern resistance to the civil rights movement. Just as the New Deal Justice Department exploited John Dillinger and the other small-time regional bandits of the 1930's to justify increases in federal law enforcement power, so Lyndon Johnson exploited the Ku Klux Klan in the 1960's.

It was Johnson's goal to use Klan violence against civil rights workers as a justification of civil rights legislation, and he personally ordered an FBI investigation of the kidnapping and murder of three civil rights workers in Mississippi in 1964 and also of the Viola Liuzzo murder in 1965. Both investigations seem to have been dress rehearsals for the later shenanigans at Waco and Ruby Ridge. In the Liuzzo killing, one of the government's main showcase horror stories about Southern resistance to integration, an FBI informant, Gary Rowe, actually took part in the murder and may actually have pulled the trigger of the gun that killed her, and Rowe may also have planted a bomb that killed four black children at a Birmingham church in 1963. In the Mississippi kidnapping and murder case, the basis of the contemptible film *Mississippi Burning*, the FBI may have used a New York gangster, Gregory Scarpa, to threaten the life of one of the suspects to discover where the bodies were buried. But aside from these illegalities, the FBI crackdown on the Klan is significant for another reason as well.

FBI operations against the Klan grew out of the Bureau's COINTELPRO operations, originally aimed at the Communist Party. Covert action aimed at the CP, and also at the New Left, could be justified on national security grounds, but no such rationale existed in the case of the Klan, a purely indigenous organization, most of whose members were never involved in illegalities or violence. Moreover, the Klan was a political organization of no small importance that impeded the expansion of federal power and presented a political threat to Johnson and his Southern allies.

By 1965, the FBI had thoroughly infiltrated the Klan with some 2,000 informants, no less than 20 percent of the group's total membership. The purpose of the infiltration was not to gain intelligence on illegal activities but rather explicitly to disrupt and destroy it as an effective organization. A memo from Hoover to FBI field agents of September 2, 1964, made this clear: "The purpose of the program is to expose, disrupt and otherwise neutralize the activities of the various Klans and hate organizations, their leadership and adherents." As Hoover's biographer Richard Gid Powers writes, "For the first time ... the Bureau's counterintelligence techniques of harassment and disruption were being directed against groups that did not have, even tangentially or theoretically, contact with foreign intelligence or an international revolutionary movement."

It was a simple matter for state-building demagogues like FDR and Lyndon Johnson to brand their political opponents as "Nazis" and "hate groups," link mainstream critics to such "extremists," and then enlist (and enlarge) federal power to spy on and disrupt any and all organized resistance to their own plans for centralization of power. The FBI was essential to their goals, since it effectively served as a means of disciplining and intimidating, if not actually repressing, resistance from the right.

And exactly the same pattern emerges in the recent witch hunt for "terrorists." The FBI's own statistics show that between 1990 and 1994 there was a whopping total of 28 terrorist incidents in the United States, that only two of these can be ascribed to "right-wing" groups, and that in 1994 there were no recorded domestic terrorist incidents at all. Yet the Bureau and the Clinton administration invoke the nonexistent "terrorist threat" as a rationale for granting even broader powers to the FBI at the same time that they smear political opponents on the right—from the militias to talk show hosts—as somehow vaguely complicit in the Oklahoma City bombing. The Republicans, meanwhile, are easily seduced into supporting the plan, which is ultimately aimed at their own supporters. Once again, the object is to intimidate legitimate political resistance by "linking" it to "extremism" and using the FBI to crush both.

If we have learned anything from Waco and Ruby Ridge, it ought to be that Americans can no longer assume that the gargantuan federal law enforcement apparatus obeys the law. In point of fact, the militias, for all the rhetorical fury unleashed upon them in the past year, have a far better record of adherence to the law than the FBI itself. Even the Republicans at last came to understand that creating a new Gestapo with which the party of the leviathan can intimidate its enemies still further would be a foolish and dangerous measure, but neither they nor most other citizens have yet come to grasp that what the administration and the FBI sought last year is part of a century-old strategy for the consolidation of power and the muzzling of those who resist it. Until they begin to understand that and reverse it, we have every reason to expect only more Wacos, more Ruby Ridges, and more use of federal law enforcement to control the enemies of the state. c

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Letter From Mexico

by Ray Lowry

Lawless Roads

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It is 10:00 P.M. as you step off the Greyhound bus in Laredo, Texas. By all rights you should feel exhausted after your 36-hour ride from Minneapolis. But the truth is, you feel pretty good. The air is cool but muggy on this late-August night. You are told that the Rio Grande is just a few blocks from the depot. You had intended to spend a night in a hotel on the Texas side of the river, but what the hell, you came down here to see Mexico, didn't you? So you throw your backpack onto your back and start hoofing it toward the bridge.

You've done some crazy things in your life. Going off to teach school in Honduras was one. Well, that one wouldn't have been so bad if you had done it for just a year. But, no, you had to eat of the lotus plant—root, flower, and stem—and now you just can't seem to pull yourself away. Except for summers, of course. Honduran schoolteachers don't make squat, so you find yourself returning to the real world every few summers to earn some real money. But this latest idea of riding the bus all the way from Minnesota back to Honduras? That's truly crazy.

There appear to be absolutely no formalities at this border. You pay 25 cents to pass through a turnstile on the United States side of the bridge. On the Mexican side, the *migracon* official waves you into his country with a smile. He shakes his head "no" when you attempt to give him your passport. "*Bienvenidos*," he says. "Ees open frontier." You walk a few blocks up the main street of Nueva Laredo until you come to Hotel Sam's, which your guidebook describes as "Spartan, yet clean and safe." So much for the guidebook. Sam's has no screens or glass on the windows, no bulbs in the light-sockets, no water in the pipes or toilets, and no doors on the hinges. Sam's is a flophouse. So you continue down the street, where after much haggling, you are given a clean, air-conditioned room for 11 American dollars (nowhere to change money at this hour). You buy a couple of beers at the corner store for a buck and fall asleep in your room watching David Letterman on a Texas television station.

The next morning you feel great. You change some money at one of the many *casas de cambio* that line Nueva Laredo's already steamy main street. You hop into the old bread delivery van which now does service as a city bus, and jump off, soaked in sweat, at the *terminal de autobus*. A first-class bus to Saltillo, a city about six hours down the road, costs you six bucks. But what a bus! Far more leg room than a Greyhound. Free coffee and sodas. And numerous videoscreens where you watch a couple of recent Hollywood movies that have been subtitled in Spanish. This is great! Maybe this idea of busing it all the way through Mexico isn't so crazy after all, you think, as the bus climbs out of the hot, humid river valley and up into the cool, dry Sierra Madres.

Saltillo is a pleasant town where the bright desert sun is tempered by an altitude of nearly 4,000 feet. Three out of every four shops seem to specialize in one trade—the sale of cowboy hats, boots, and belts, the kind with huge silver and turquoise buckles. People lounge about in the central square doing nothing. You almost expect Clint Eastwood to come riding around the corner on horseback. You spend the night hoisting mugs of beer in an old wooden saloon with honest-to-God swinging doors. Meanwhile, the local inebriates try to enlighten you about the "*situacion mexicano*." It isn't very enlightening. The politicians are all into buggery, they say—the ultimate insult in this land of machismo.

Politics in Mexico? Where to begin? Basically, Mexico is a gigantic version of the old American urban political machine. The strings are all pulled by the Institutional Revolutionary Party (known by its Spanish acronym PRI), whose fingers are into everything. The PRI is contested by the National Action Party (PAN) and the Democratic Revolutionary Party (PRD), but there really is no contest. A few governorships and senatorial seats are thrown to the PAN and PRD to maintain the appearance of democracy. But the PRI rules Mexico. They are the longest continuously ruling party in the world today, having outlasted the Soviet communists. A few *politicos* who have made the mistake of trying to reform the PRI have met their fates at the barrel end of a gun. Investigations into these murders implicate brothers, sisters, in-laws, and cousins of major PRI figures. The web of intrigue and incest is so complex that it makes the plot of a Gabriel García Márquez novel seem simplistic. No, you can't blame Mexicans for their cynical view of politicians.

The next day you find yourself in Zacatecas after another comfortable ride in another first-class Mexican bus. Zacatecas is an old silver mining town nearly 9,000 feet in the mountains. The main cathedral and several government buildings were built in an extremely ornate and lavish fashion by 18th-century silver barons. These buildings are a marvel. But the rest of the town is comprised of nondescript houses of concrete built up the sides of the mountains. A cable car takes you up to the highest peak. The view is disappointingly unspectacular, though you find a huge monument to Pancho Villa, one of Mexico's more colorful heroes. It was Villa's brilliant capture of Zacatecas in 1914 that turned the tide of the second phase of the Mexican Revolution.

In Villa's day, bandit-revolutionaries were up-front and honest about their intentions. They wore their guns outside of their pants. Villa once sacked two American towns, then dared the United States Army to come and get him. They came, but failed to get their man. Today's Mexican bandit-revolutionaries hide behind face masks and a cordon of Red Cross personnel in the southern state of Chiapas. Mexicans appear to be as cynical about the semimysterious *subcomandante* Marcos of the Zapatista National Liberation Army as they are about the PRI.

The following morning is spent hopping on and off numerous second-class buses in an attempt to get to Guanajua-

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to, a gorgeous little town off the main highway to Mexico City. Like Zacatecas, Guanajuato was a silver town. But when the silver gave out, the government put the miners to work digging a honeycomb of tunnels throughout the hills upon which the town is built. The result is a unique place where pedestrian walkways and automobile passageways cut through the mountains like so many holes in Swiss cheese. The beauty of Guanajuato is beyond description. So, too, is the oddity of the Guanajuato mummy museum. The dry climate and alkaline content of the soil naturally mummifies the remains of those buried here. And unless you can afford to pay a hefty fee to have your loved ones interred "in perpetuity," you may find them disinterred and put on display in the mummy museum 20 years hence. Very odd. And so very Mexican, this fixation with death.

Another day and another brief ride on a second-class bus brings you to San Miguel de Allende, another beautiful highland town. San Miguel and Guanajuato are considered the *cuña de independencia*, or the cradle of independence. It was in these towns that the notion of an independent Mexico was born, and the resulting battle for independence was commenced and completed. Oddly enough, it is these same towns that possess such a strikingly colonial character—so very *Spanish*. Yet the locals insist that San Miguel is the *corazon de Mexico*, or the heart of Mexico. And as you walk the cobblestone streets, worn smooth from five centuries of use, you sense that surely it must be. This, in spite of the large number of American expatriates of a "New Age" persuasion who have settled here. No, not even a bunch of *gringo* astrology freaks can destroy the spirit of this place.

If San Miguel is the heart of Mexico, then Mexico City, where you arrive by bus early the next afternoon, must be its bowels. Twenty-five million people—the equivalent of the entire populations of California or Canada—reside in this sprawling mass of concrete chaos. How this place can continue to function is a mystery. Sheer inertia, you guess. Thirty percent of the water in this water-starved valley is thought to be lost to leaky pipes. Natural gas leaks regularly explode, taking out buildings, or in some cases entire city blocks. The air is a noxious yellow haze of sulphur dioxide. Breathing it is said to be akin to smoking three packs of cigarettes daily. Schoolchildren wear surgical face masks to class in a futile attempt to protect their health. Keiko the killer whale, star of the Hollywood movie *Free Willy*, is undoubtedly dying of respiratory disease at his home in a local amusement park.

This city couldn't function at all, you conclude, had they not invested in a wonderfully efficient and clean subway system some years back. You leave your backpack at the bus depot's luggage check, enter the subway system map in hand, and start checking out the sights. The Chapultepec Castle is magnificent. The National Museum of Fine Arts is exquisite. The anthropology museum is a wonder. But this place is just too big and too fast. You return to the bus depot that evening, retrieve your backpack, and buy a ticket for the 10:30 P.M. bus to Oaxaca. You climb aboard, knock back a few cold *Coronas*, and put your seat into super-recline. You awake at 6:00 A.M. out of the chaos and back into tranquillity.

Oaxaca is a charming, peaceful city built around a pleasantly shaded *zocolo*, or central park. The feeling here is much different from the northern part of Mexico. It is slower-paced and more indigenous. Really more like Central America than the north. Barefooted Indian women, their hair braided with brightly colored strips of cloth, sell baskets of *chapulinas*, or fried grasshoppers, in the streets. You try them and find they aren't bad. A bit salty, perhaps. And maybe a bit more garlic than you'd recommend. The flavor is similar to beef jerky, though the crunchy insects melt in your mouth and require no real chewing.

Oaxaca was once home to two of Mexico's former leaders—one among the most honored, the other among the most dishonored. A little Indian boy by the name of Benito Juarez learned to read and write in Oaxaca. As an adult, he led Mexican troops in defeat of French colonial forces at Quereterro. It was there that the puppet Emperor Maximillian was put up against the *adobe* in 1867. Another Mexican boy of a more European bloodline grew up in Oaxaca. He assisted Juarez in the overthrow of the French. But upon Juarez's death, he assumed dictatorial powers and ruled Mexico with an iron hand for 30 years. Francophile to the hilt, Porfirio Diaz powdered his cheeks to affect a more European appearance. He lived the ostentatious lifestyle of the emperor he helped defeat. And when he was driven from Mexico by revolutionaries in 1910, he went to France, where he currently rests with past French luminaries in the Pantheon. A very curious man. A very curious country.

The following morning, the results are in on a very curious election. A rump National Consultation Poll was held the previous week. You hadn't even been aware of it. But neither were the vast majority of Mexicans, or perhaps they just didn't care. The National Consultation Poll was held to give legitimacy to *subcomandante* Marcos and the Zapatista National Liberation Army. But the results appear to have done the opposite. Over 900,000 votes were cast at some 8,000 different polling stations. A majority of voters—53 percent—believe the Zapatistas should "remain an independent force." The remaining 47 percent believe the guerrillas should disarm and join existing parties within the political process.

It initially appears that a half-million of Marcos' fellow citizens support his insurgency. But further investigation shows that the election was open to Internet users, and that as many as half of the total number of votes cast may have been done by computer. Most of these came either from the United States or Spain. It is conceivable that *no one* in Mexico supports Marcos! In fact, not one person you have talked with on your journey has expressed the slightest support. All agree that the government is corrupt and needs changing, but no one seems to feel that Marcos is the man to change it. In fact, many Mexicans believe he is a PRI dupe who is diverting attention while other more sinister actions are taking place elsewhere.

The Zapatista political line: "The principal demands of the people of Mexico are land, work, sufficient food, health, education, culture, information, independence, democracy, liberty, justice, peace, security, opposition to corruption, and the defense of the environment." Simple. Simply infantile. They began their insurgency in January 1994 in opposition to the North American Free Trade Agreement. How the importation of jobs, foodstuffs, and technology could hinder their demands mystifies you. They retreated into the forest and called a truce when government troops moved in. Lengthy negotiations about the possibility of negotiations ensued. As this is written, Marcos and company have been holed up in the village of San

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Andres de Larrainzar for several months. The small rebel zone is surrounded—protected would be a better term—by a "civil corridor" of Red Cross workers who, in turn, are surrounded by the Mexican Army. Cholera is endemic in the rebel zone. Lengthy negotiations about the possibility of negotiating the commencement of negotiations continue. Meanwhile, tourism, the one sure-fire income producer that the state of Chiapas had going for it, is grinding to a halt. So too is the cultivation of village lands.

You purchase an overnight bus ticket to San Cristóbal de las Casas, one of the towns briefly overrun by the Zapatistas back in 1994. You are warned that bus hijackings are becoming more commonplace, so you put your passport, credit cards, traveler's checks, and most of your cash in a small purse which you then slide down into your pants. You leave 20 one dollar bills and assorted small *peso* notes in your wallet. You climb aboard the first-class bus, watch a movie on the video screens, and drift off to sleep.

"*Andalé! Andalé! Andalé, Chavos! Somos Zapatista!*" No, this can't be happening! The bus is stopped on the winding road leading to San Cristóbal. The big overhead lights are on. It is 4:00 A.M. In the aisle are five little Indian men with red bandannas pulled over their faces. Three are brandishing old .38 caliber pistols. The other two hold what appear to be 410-gauge single-shot shotguns. "*Dame tu dinero! Rapido!*" They move from passenger to passenger demanding money. You carefully pull out your wallet and hand over the contents. Not quite. In your nervousness to extract the bills from your wallet, you accidentally leave one ten *peso* note inside. He sees that. Whack! A shotgun barrel to the side of your head. "*Dame todo!*" he screams. You hand over the remaining bill. That's not enough. He must also have your Minneapolis Public Library card and your Republican National Committee membership, both of which look like credit cards. And so it goes, each passenger getting the same treatment. One Italian is pistol-whipped until he liberates himself of his Italian shoes!

You are herded with the others out into the darkness. All passengers are liberated of fanny-packs, pocket change, and wristwatches in the process. One member of the gang holds a shotgun on the crowd while the others quickly go through the bus grabbing every purse, small backpack, and fanny pack that had been slid underneath seats in the confusion. You are then herded back onto the bus. The bus driver starts the bus, and you continue down the road.

Cigarettes are fired up everywhere, something strictly forbidden on Mexican buses. Even the driver lights one up. You have one too, even though you haven't smoked for years. Passengers look frantically for their bags and purses. But, alas, everyone has lost everything. Money, passports, credit cards, traveler's checks, airline tickets. You don't mention that you've still got all of yours down your pants. No need to rub it in.

You continue ten miles down the highway to a *federale* station. The distraught driver explains what happened, then locks himself in the bus lavatory, where he remains for the next several hours. Six *federales*, each brandishing *two* semiautomatic rifles, jump into a land rover. So, too, does a passenger who knows the area well and can pinpoint the exact location of the heist. You stand around and smoke with fellow passengers. The foreign tourists are particularly devastated, having lost passports and airline tickets. Luckily, the undercarriage luggage wasn't touched. The bus companies in this area have taken to locking the compartments at each station. The drivers do not have keys, and hijackers know this.

The *federales* return after about three hours. They found one wallet *sin dinero* on the ground where the incident took place, but nothing more. They shrug their shoulders. The driver lets himself out of the lavatory and climbs into his seat. The passengers reboard the bus, and off you go, arriving in San Cristóbal at 11:00 A.M., four hours later than expected. You learn that several buses coming from Guatemala—your intended destination—were robbed during the

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night, too.

San Cristóbal is a beautiful little town, but it's filled with refugees. Thousands of impoverished Indian people from the countryside begging, or trying to sell little plastic trinkets. Several of your fellow passengers say it just wasn't this way a few years ago—before the Zapatistas stirred things up. All these people lived their traditional lives in their traditional villages. But that is over now, thanks to the Zapatistas.

Zapatistas! How appropriately named. After the 1910 Mexican Revolution, the impatient Emiliano Zapata rebelled against the revolution, thereby throwing Mexico into a decade of chaos. And the thieves who robbed you—were they Zapatistas? Perhaps. Perhaps not. But the general climate of lawlessness that permitted them to pull such a stunt is the Zapatistas' gift to this region.

Heavy rains begin to fall, adding to the depression you already feel. Refugees huddle in doorways or beneath plastic garbage bags they have taken from trash bins. You have a very late breakfast in a small *comedor* where, in the space of a half-hour, you are bothered 50 or more times by beggars. This is too much. You walk back to the bus station and purchase a ticket on the night bus to Chetumal, a city on the Mexico/Belize border.

The bus leaves San Cristóbal at 5:30 P.M. and arrives in Chetumal at 6:00 A.M. You don't watch the video movies. You don't read. You don't write in your journal. You don't sleep. You don't even worry about another bus robbery. You just think. What a lovely country you just passed through. What friendly and good people you met. Industrious and honest. Everywhere they were talkative, helpful, and patient. So undeserving of a corrupt government. And a "liberation army" intent on liberating them from their right to live in peace.

You cross the bridge into Belize. It's steamy hot. But you've been here before. They speak English, and their money comes in dollar denominations—complete with a picture of Queen Elizabeth on each bill. So you feel safe, as if you are in some long-forgotten tropical province of Canada. You climb onto a Belize City-bound bus, take a seat, and leave that enigma called Mexico behind. You feel both relief and regret. You do not look back.

Ray Lowry teaches at a primary school on the island of Roatan in Honduras.

Letter From Chiapas

by Gonzalo Castillo-Cárdenas

Low Intensity Conflict

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The motto "Justice and Dignity" appears in almost every letter and *comunicado* of the Zapatista Army of National Liberation (EZLN). The two concepts lay at the heart of the peasants' uprising in Chiapas.

The Mexican State of Chiapas has 3.4 million people, 35 percent of whom are Indians speaking 18 different languages. The land is blessed by great natural wealth. Thirty percent of all the territorial water of Mexico runs through here, generating 55 percent of all hydroelectric energy used by the nation. PEMEX, the federal agency that controls Mexican petroleum, drills 92,000 barrels of petroleum from here each day, and 516 billion cubic feet of natural gas every year. However, only 57 percent of the people of Chiapas enjoy running water, and over 30 percent of living quarters lack electricity. Half of the territory of Chiapas is forests, including the famous "Selva Lacandona," one of the most valuable biological reserves in the world because of its precious woods and biological diversity. However, in the last three decades, 30 percent of its trees have been lost to the logging industry or to domestic use, at a faster rhythm of deforestation than in the Amazon basin.

Although Chiapas occupies the first place in the nation in coffee production, the second in cattle raising, and the third in corn, its population ranks close to the top in malnutrition, hunger, and disease. Illiteracy in Chiapas is three times the national average for people over 15 years of age, of whom only 1.12 percent finish high school. Thus, in the midst of immense wealth, most of the population is the victim of artificial poverty, social marginality, and political oppression.

For the Mexican upper class, especially those who promote NAFTA and take pride in calling themselves part of the "First World," this image is embarrassing, if not contrary to reality, which they consider firmly established in the urban, industrial, and modern world. But for 80 percent of the Mexican population, the heavy-laden women and children of the Mexican countryside reveal the most characteristic feature of reality, not only the Indian's, but also their own. The Mexican poor, the unemployed, the working poor, the small bureaucrat, see themselves like the Indian carrying the heavy loads of "progress," thus paying the tribute that continues to be exacted from the Mexican economy by the conquistadors of today. "Take a mirror and see yourselves," writes Subcommander Marcos, the visible head of the rebellion.

The conditions of injustice and indignity that prevail in Chiapas help explain the people's uprising that began on January 1, 1994. Despite its limited military strength, the uprising precipitated a "crisis" that had been brewing for a long time and which could no longer be ignored. There are three aspects to the conflict.

The first involves consciousness-raising among the Indians. Economic and sociological factors have contributed to this, as significant numbers have been forced to become seasonal workers in neighboring coffee and sugar plantations, thus enlarging their understanding of the economic connections behind their suffering and enabling them to establish links with plantation laborers and urban poor, both *mestizo* and *ladino*, and with their leaders. But even more important has been the role of religion. The campaign of Archbishop Méndez Arceo of Cuernavaca in the early 1960's to make the Bible accessible to the common people, the influence of the Second Vatican Council and of liberation theology with its "option for the poor," to the present identification of the dioceses of Chiapas and of its bishop Samuel Ruiz with the defense of human rights—all have affected how the indigenous people view their socioeconomic condition. Bishop Ruiz is recognized nationally and internationally as a champion of human rights, and through his leadership as Director of the Center of Human Rights, "Fray Bartotomé de las Casas," and as president of the National Negotiating Commission, the bishop has become a strong force.

Secondly, the number of Indian and peasant organizations has increased considerably since the 1970's. The first Indian Congress, convened in 1974 by Bishop Ruiz, became the seedbed of several organizations, having as a common denominator the Indian social base and the

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condition of the poor. Today there are 280 organizations affiliated to CEDIC, the state-level Council of Indians and Peasants. Despite their great diversity of perspectives and goals, the central issues of justice and dignity give unity to them all, emphasizing agrarian policy, land, respect for individual and communal human rights, politics free of corruption, just prices for their products, and public services such as running water, electricity, schools, health care, sanitation, roads, etc. This upsurge of organizations "from below" parallels, and to a certain extent reflects, the increased repression from the top, as rich ranchers, landowners, plantation owners (sugar and coffee) have organized private armies known as *guardias blancas*, which, although clandestine and illegal, operate freely throughout Chiapas.

Thirdly, there is the clash of rising expectations and increasing demands, especially among the Indians, which the politically powerful totally ignore. The Indian communities saw NAFTA and the entire "neoliberal" project imposed by the Salinas administration as a mere scheme by the political elite to garner international capital, which in turn produced the Chiapas conflict.

For the natives of Chiapas, as for most of the world's poor, the globalization of the economy is a disaster that has already happened. With the ability of transnational corporations to relocate their plants around the world, the global economy forces all workers, communities, and nations to become competitors for the corporation's favors; and as governments wish to attract investments, they also seek to pulverize ethnic communities that persist in their traditional economies, thus making the poor vulnerable to corporations as sources of cheap labor. This explains why Chiapas' poor, especially the Indian communities, have regarded the NAFTA agreement as their own death sentence. During 1993, when the agreement was being negotiated, the Salinas administration used the power of the state to break down the institutional protection of the native communities (Article 27 of the constitution) in preparation for Mexico's entry into NAFTA. Through its total control of the senate, the government approved a constitutional revision that prohibited further expropriation of large landholdings under the agrarian reform laws while allowing for the breakup and sale of *ejidos*, the peasants' cooperative farms. Thus, one of the key achievements of the Mexican revolution was sacrificed at the altar of the New Economic Order, thus aggravating the plight of Indian peasants all over Mexico.

After the initial attempt to wipe out the rebels militarily, the federal government came to its senses, agreeing to negotiate a solution, a process that has dragged on for over a year and a half. Meanwhile, the federal army and other security forces carry on a parallel strategy taken from the textbooks of counterinsurgency training at the School of the Americas, of which the three generals in charge of the Chiapas operations are graduates. It is known as "low intensity conflict," which was successfully applied in El Salvador, Guatemala, and Nicaragua. In this well-structured war plan, the target is the civilian population. It involves the careful management of the "image of the army," making it appear friendly, giving public concerts, carrying on social service activities, passing out candies to children and food to the communities. Meanwhile, sporadic but systematic violations of human rights occur: the sudden search of a peasant home, another peasant leader tortured, a young woman raped, another local leader "disappeared," a sudden takeover of a certain village. The fact that these violations are not generalized enables the army to portray them as isolated cases, "excesses" or "abuses" to be investigated later. The timing of the operations is also carefully considered. In the Altos de Chiapas, for example, military penetration took place during the critical weeks when the peasants were preparing their plots for planting beans and coffee, the staples of their diet. In some cases, the meager food reserves were destroyed or sprayed with insecticide. The end result was to leave the entire population dependent for its survival on food distributions by the army. In some cases, even the water tanks were contaminated with petroleum. Thus, the "low intensity conflict" strategy in fact intensifies the human rights crisis which the poor and especially the Indian population of Chiapas has suffered for many years.

Different from most Latin American guerrilla wars of the Cold War period, the Chiapas rebellion, whose social base comprises Indians and small farmers or *campesinos*, is not aimed at toppling the state, but at achieving respect ("*reconocimiento*"), and gaining a say in how their lives are governed. It is the search for a sustainable Mexican society "with room for everyone," where the "little ones" are guaranteed the right to speak "the truthful word" and to be heard and taken into account; for a community of life gathering the traditions of a people yearning for equality, justice, and the ancestral democratic structures of the rural population that are based on dialogue, consensus, continuous consultation, and persistent vigilance of local leaders through communal assemblies, what the Tzeltal Indians call *wojk ta wojk* ("to throw and gather the word").

Every struggle for "dignity and justice" is frail and uncertain. Its outcome is linked to, and to a large extent depends on, structural changes in the economic, social, political, and cultural fields, which threaten recalcitrant habits, established forms, and vested interests, and in the case of the present Mexican crisis, the interests behind the NAFTA agreement. The leaders of the Chiapas rebellion are very aware of this, as shown by the fact that the denunciation of NAFTA is a central feature of EZLN's platform. In the end, EZLN does not see itself as a pressure group, but as the militant conscience of the country as a whole.

Gonzalo Castillo-Cárdenas is a professor at the Pittsburgh Theological Seminary. This letter is based on a recent visit to San Cristóbal de las Casas, Chiapas.

Letter From Romney Marsh

by Derrick Turner

Casting an Eye

◆

As the car purred southward into the blue distance along the Kent-Sussex border, I felt as if we were gently falling into the sea. As you approach the Marshes, you are approaching a land which has always had an ambiguous relationship with the sea, which has always looked seawards rather than landwards, which bears little resemblance to the gentle English landscapes that surround it. You always feel that these lands so lately rescued from the waters may some day gently

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subside back below them—as if they had never been, like some latter-day "land of lost content."

As you get closer, and slip into the windy, grassy immensity, you relinquish real life with relief. You fall into numinous abstraction, as you look over the bare desolation, and cannot but think of unworkaday things—how the moon rides high and white over the damp levels, of flocks of lapwings (*Vanellus Vanellus*) breaking the sky, long days of heat-haze above the sheep-dotted flatness, chilly worship in damp churches, and shades of the humble, faceless medieval workers who yet achieved immortality by wrenching a piece of England from the reluctant sea and tilling it into submissive fertility, fighting a generations-long Agincourt of the soil. You can nearly hear church bells tolling, guiding travelers home through the drenching fog, along narrow paths through bogs and over precarious plank bridges above weed-choked dikes full of frogs.

The Marshes have an archetypal, dreamlike quality that encourages such reveries. Although the area is small, and many tourists cross it every year, it manages to preserve an air of ghostly remoteness. "Romney Marsh," wrote Richard Church in his *Kent* (1948), "shrinks away from the mob, turning unto itself and the ceaseless music, aeolian harp music, that seems to hover above it in the air." Even more practical people fall under an enchantment when they visit. "There are northerners who call it too beautiful; we have visitors who cannot keep awake in the strong, soft air coming up from Romney Marsh . . . and who, on waking, eat vastly," reported H.E. Bates in *The English Countryside* (1939). Someone who escaped being enchanted was Lambarde, who described the marshes as "evil in winter, grievous in summer, and never good."

After spending a little time in the much-photographed, tourist-full town of Rye, we headed along the coastal road toward Lydd. The road between Rye and Lydd is sparsely populated, although there are many caravans near Camber Sands. The only sounds to be heard usually are the songs of larks and the hyperboreal screeching of seagulls. The beaches near Lydd are used for artillery practice (the explosive Lyddite was first used here) and the long fences along the seafront add to the feeling of strangeness. The most interesting building in Lydd is the Church of All Saints, known as "The Cathedral of the Marshes" (mostly 13th century, but with Saxon remnants). Although Lydd was once an island, and became a full member of the Cinque Ports Confederation in 1155, it lost its harbor after storms in 1287 shoved the shoreline southward.

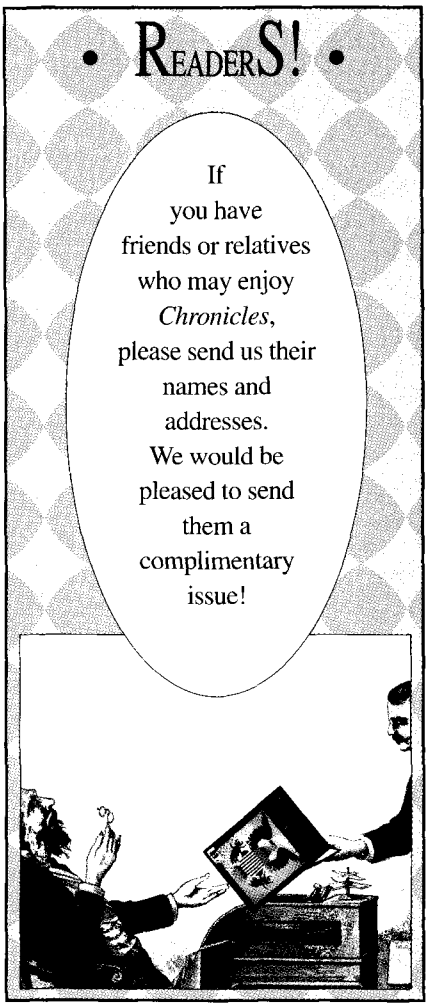
Even stranger, more remote and more postapocalyptic than the road to Lydd, is the shingle promontory of Dungeness, which is growing seawards at about 20 feet a year. There is an important bird reserve here, two lighthouses, plenty of bungalows, and even a nuclear power station, and it is a favorite place for angling, but it still preserves an aura of frontier territory. Beached boats stand amongst the sea-thistles and the black-painted bungalows, on a sloping, banked beach littered with feathers, driftwood, fish skeletons, crab carapaces, and pieces of lobster pot. A touch of surrealism is added by the tiny railway lines that carry the miniature steam railway across the stony wastes between Hythe and the tip of the promontory. The men digging for lugworms on the tidal flats were suspended in vagueness, as if they were in midair, their very reflections broken by the rippled wet sand.

We went back into the Marshes proper, northwards as the evening started to close in, to St. Mary in the Marsh, with its little Norman church of St. Mary the Virgin. This church is best known as the burial place of E. Nesbit, author of the children's story *The Secret Garden*. There are two lovely floor brasses here, one from 1499, the other from 1502. Inside it is tastefully Spartan (the Church of England's gospel was always: "By taste are ye saved," according to Emerson), although the ascetic effect was relieved by the Harvest offerings that were ranged around.

We got back into the car and traveled north past yet more fields of Romney Marsh sheep (a distinct breed, probably introduced by Flemish settlers). On the very edge of the Marsh, where the land rises into the Weald, and the remnants of primeval forest still wave ragged defiance of the modern world, and whisper of drowned Dimsdale, stands the hamlet of Bilsington, where the church of Peter and Paul gives you a last taste of Marsh numinousness. The mostly Norman church is up a narrow lane, and is almost invisible from the road. It is surrounded by trees, some of them yews, supposedly planted by pilgrims to Canterbury, who would often stop here for the night.

One of the churchyard epitaphs reads: "Stop stranger, stop and cast an eye, / As you are now, so once was I / As I am now soon you will be, / Prepare for death and follow me." There is a 15th-century bell from the tower on a frame in the churchyard, with the inscription "For many a year John's bell shall sound." There is a sign in the porch asking one to be careful to shut the door, so as to exclude sheep from the building. The gleam of encaustics, the faint smell of polish, and the bright colors of the hassocks, even in the declining light, speak volumes for the devotion of the women of the parish. We left the silent, darkening church and stood quietly for a while, watching a tractor ripping up the rich tilth, and beyond, at the whole elegiac expanse of England. The tractor stopped, and now the only sound was the rush of the wind in the black trees, and among the dark grasses.

Derrick Turner is the editor of Right Now!, *published in London.*



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MEDIA

The Truth About the Million Man March

by Marc Morano

"It's time for the government to pay us reparations for the 300 years of slavery that they put on us," declared a marcher in the Million Man March in Washington, D.C., on October 16. I attended the march on assignment for *Rush Limbaugh, The Television Show*. My coverage of the march aired on Mr. Limbaugh's nationally syndicated program on October 18. The focus of my coverage was exclusively on the marchers who came from all across the United States. The interviews that I conducted with the marchers revealed a Million Man March that was far different from the one portrayed by the mainstream media.

The press coverage of the Million Man March was highly selective, portraying the marchers as a unified group, without controversy. The national news reports focused on superficial feel-good sentiments about why the marchers attended. As in the past, the mainstream media failed to delve into any of the issues surrounding the march.

While the participants were generally friendly and dedicated to the concept of the march, several divisive issues boiled beneath the surface. The responses were far from unifying. Many of the participants expressed hostility to white people, if not downright hatred. A sample of the comments: "We don't listen to white people no more"; "Shame on you White America, Shame on you"; "Whites, if you are willing to apologize, we are willing to forgive." I was referred to at one point during an interview as "you people."

I was refused literature from one man passing out "Afrikan Liberation" tracts because I was white. When I asked for his leaflet he looked at me and said, "You're not African," and turned his back. I found one of his leaflets on the ground; it was a call to "National Liberation." It stated, "black people could never be free in Amerikkka [sic]—our state of neo-slavery . . . our liberation is tied to Amerikkka's destruction."

Other marchers displayed this same attitude. A group of men marched under an upside down American flag. A sticker being distributed at the march read, "100 Million Africans died for America's sins." One man railed against what he termed "the Republican Fuhrmanistic attitude" that prevailed in America. Another man expressed his distrust of police officers by explaining how we have traded "white sheets for blue uniforms."

The mainstream press referred to the "controversial" Nation of Islam without fully examining its charter beliefs. The literature distributed at the Million Man March provided the details. *The Final Call* is the bimonthly publication of the Nation of Islam. In every issue, the back page is a reprint of their platform entitled, "What the Muslims Want." It states in part: "We want our people in America whose parents or grandparents were descendants from slaves to be allowed to establish a separate state or territory of their own. . . . We believe that our former slave masters are obligated to provide such land . . . and that our former slave masters are obligated to maintain and supply our needs . . . for the next 20 to 25 years—until we are able to produce and supply our own needs. . . . We do not believe that after 400 years of free or nearly free labor, sweat and blood, which has helped America become rich and powerful, that so many thousands of Black people should subsist on relief, charity or live in poor houses." The platform also states, "We believe that intermarriage or race mixing should be prohibited."

Even though the marchers I spoke with did not mention the establishment of a separate nation, many of them agreed with the sentiments expressed in the Nation of Islam platform. One man proclaimed, "We deserve reparations . . . we were enslaved and beat down for over 439 years in this country, a lot of man hours, a lot of free labor. That's how this country got so rich and powerful so fast, they had no overhead. Me and my ancestors and the seed that come after me are owed something." Another man stated, "How can we forget the past when the past continues to haunt us today? How can you tell me to forget the past when you continue to afflict with the same thing that we have been afflicted with for 400 years?" Another marcher agreed, commenting that nothing has changed since the days of slavery. He stated, "You take us from my native land, you put us in shacks behind your big mansions . . . and today you take big buildings and put us in projects."

One man explained why many of the marchers believe the odds are stacked against them in America today. "You don't want to give us no jobs. You don't want to give us no way to take care of ourselves. But you want to give us drugs and guns and then you want to arrest us and put us in jail for it."

Successful blacks in America were explained away as either flukes or traitors for turning on their fellow blacks. One man used the following analogy to illustrate how some blacks can become successful: "It's like if I step on an ant mound, the masses are going to be at my feet and only so many are going to get up around my neck and I'll knock those off as they come: O.J., Tyson, I'll flick them off." Another man lamented, "What's wrong with most of the black men who do make it? They become sellouts. They become what we call house niggers. They're just 'yes' men, not for the people."

Race-mixing comments and signs were in evidence. One T-shirt had a picture of O.J. Simpson on it with the words, "Take it from me, leave them white bitches alone." One man explained that interracial marriage was harmful, because "that which you seek outside the community, weakens the community." He urged black men and women to "marry people that look like our mothers and look like our fathers."

Another theme that prevailed was black economic separatism. There was resentment toward Asian-Americans for the perception that they profit unfairly from businesses in black neighborhoods. In addition, one man deplored that blacks are "totally dependent on the white community," saying "blacks have got to hand another black dollar to another black hand."

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Alternative views of American history were abundant. A group of men calling themselves Moroccan Moors claimed to be the Founding Fathers of America. A member of the group stated, "Our flag, the Moroccan flag, was cut down in 1776 by General George Washington on Six Chestnut Street in Philadelphia. . . . This is the Moroccan empire of the West. . . . We helped frame the Constitution of the United States. Thomas Jefferson was Moorish, Alexander Hamilton was Moorish."

Several marchers seemed to express anger regarding the historical prominence of the holocaust. One marcher observed, "Jews can say never forget the Holocaust, but we're supposed to forget the past. How come one holocaust is more important than another?" Another man added, "How could I possibly let six million deaths outweigh 400 million of my people who died coming here?"

The messages of the Million Man March are contradictory. One message was about unity, pride, and self-reliance. The other message was racial division and government dependence. Some participants virtually begged for government assistance. One man stated, "Please give us money and let us do something."

Did the news media report any of this division and controversy surrounding the march? Sadly, the national news media chose to ignore these significant issues. The Million Man March provided the latest example of how the mainstream media cannot be trusted to tell the public the whole story.

The media coverage of this event was far from unique. As a freelance journalist, I have worked for a variety of news outlets, including the major network news organizations and alternative news outlets such as National Empowerment Television. I have witnessed firsthand the media selectivity at event after event. From abortion rights marches, gay rights rallies, to environmental marches, the media filter the proceedings in favor of shallow feel-good coverage.

The mainstream press has lulled the left in Washington into expecting rubber-stamp press coverage of every event. Liberal elected officials and advocacy groups have always been able to look at the media as an extension of their public relation efforts. Conservatives view the media as adversarial, out to trip them up at every turn.

Any reporter who bucks this system pays the price. In 1993, I became the first reporter in history to have my camera seized at the White House, solely because I was working for Rush Limbaugh. Last November, I was assigned to cover a Democratic fund-raiser at a hotel in Washington, D.C. Upon learning I was working with Mr. Limbaugh's television program, Democratic party officials had security officers escort me out of the hotel lobby. The *Washington Times* commented that, "Democratic senators and party officials reacted as if they had spotted Count Dracula" when I revealed I was working for Rush Limbaugh. Imagine the outcry if conservatives seized equipment and forcibly removed reporters they considered to be adversarial. What would the reaction have been if a Richard Nixon or a Newt Gingrich had treated a reporter in this manner?

As a result of this media selectivity and bias, there has been a rise of alternative news and information sources. Talk radio, led by Rush Limbaugh, has emerged as a powerful alternative to the established media. Other new and emerging information outlets include Paul Weyrich's National Empowerment Television and the coming Conservative Television Network. In addition, the explosion of the information superhighway has helped make the established media increasingly irrelevant. Let us hope these fledgling news and information sources force the mainstream media's coverage of events like the Million Man March into proper balance.

Marc Morano, a reporter for Rush Limbaugh, The Television Show, *writes from McLean, Virginia.*

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Judging the Serbs

by Dimitri Magganas

On May 25, 1993, the U.N. Security Council unanimously adopted Resolution 827, which established the International Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia since 1991. Of course, by ignoring the atrocities that occurred in the Balkans during 1941-1945 and by limiting its scope to events since 1991, the Tribunal will be decontextualizing the issues at stake in the current war. This is just one of several matters that call into question the credibility of the Tribunal.

In composition, it does not include even one member from an Eastern Orthodox country, despite the fact that this civil war is fought among the Catholic, Muslim, and Orthodox communities. According to U.N. document A/49/3 42S/1994/1007, which lists the 11 judges' countries of origin, four are Islamic, four are Roman Catholic, and three are from states with a secular legal tradition—none, in other words, is Orthodox Christian.

More alarming still is that the Commission of Experts, appointed to collect data for the Tribunal, is headed by an ardent Muslim, Mammoud Cherif Basiouni. No less disturbing, the database for the collection of war crimes is housed at the Roman Catholic De Paul University in Chicago. Moreover, the same U.N. document shows that (excluding the pledges of several Western countries) 93 percent of the financial contributions to the Tribunal have come from two Muslim countries, Malaysia and Pakistan.

Under such circumstances, the Serbs doubt that their case will be treated without prejudice. It is not puzzling that, to date, the Tribunal has not indicted Muslim or Croat perpetrators of crimes committed against Serbs, despite the fact that several nongovernmental Serbian organizations have submitted to the Commission of Experts, in Chicago and in the Hague, documented war crimes committed in Western Slavonia, Krajina, and Bosnia-Herzegovina by Croat, Muslim, and Mujahedin units. Will the atrocities committed by the forces of the governments of Croatia and Bosnia be conveniently blamed on the "unidentifiable" Mujahedins and soldiers of "international" brigades who came to help kill the Serb "aggressors"? Who will be charged for the war crimes of these "volunteers"? In this context, Serbs have reason to be skeptical and to question the ability of the Tribunal to render justice.

Dimitri Magganas is president of the Byzantine-American Alliance in Pinole, California.

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CRIME

Flogging

by Sherman McCall

"Boys had been beaten since history began and it would be a bad day for the world if ever, inconceivably, boys should cease to be beaten." So said C.S. Forester in *Lieutenant Hornblower.*

Clarence Davis, a black Democratic member of the Maryland House of Delegates, courageously proposed restoring judicial flogging in Maryland last year. Courts would give up to ten lashes with a rattan cane for minors at least 14 years old who commit theft or vandalism worth more than $300. In the past, such a proposal would have met with derision. But in the wake of the caning case in Singapore, a conservative resurgence at the polls, and increasing frustration with crime at home, flogging's time may have come again.

Except for keeping incorrigibles off the street, ever longer prison sentences are costly and unlikely to provide additional deterrence. More important is the probability, immediacy, and type of punishment. Corporal punishment might serve admirably. Citizens modify behavior in fear of crime. Why wouldn't criminals modify theirs in fear of punishment? This seems logical, but we must be cautious. A logical fallacy plagues social science; the fact that one event follows another is no proof of causation. While favorable to countries practicing corporal punishment, simple crime rate comparison doesn't account for other social factors. Neither is the surge in crime since the abolition of flogging in the United States conclusive.

Davis proposed a four-year experiment with corporal punishment. However, the experiment has already been made. There were no judicial floggings in the United States during World War II, while we harnessed the violent impulses of our young men overseas. Flogging resumed sporadically after 1945. Let us compare the change in population-adjusted FBI crime rates for each state that imposed corporal punishment to the simultaneous national trend.

Arkansas lashed three men in June 1946 for burglary and grand larceny. It was a tonic. While the postwar crime wave receded marginally in 1947, Arkansas enjoyed precipitous declines compared with the rest of the country: robbery (AR, -45 percent; U.S., -5 percent), burglary (AR, -22; U.S., -2), larceny (AR, -11; U.S., -1), aggravated assaults fell six percent in Arkansas; they *rose* seven percent nationally.

Last employed in 1940, Delaware imposed two flogging sentences in 1945 and 1946. The following year saw a miraculous fall in violent crime compared to 1945: robbery (DE -23; U.S., +9) and aggravated assault (DE, -58; U.S., +19)—this despite the return of thousands of battle-hardened soldiers that drove up crime nationwide. Property crimes rose much less than the average, particularly burglary (DE, +5; U.S., +20) and larceny (DE, +15; U.S., +21).

Maryland's last flogging came in 1948 for wife-beating. An immediate improvement in crime rates occurred over 1947, even while crime rose nationally: robbery (MD, -11; U.S., -6), aggravated assault (MD, -11; U.S., +5), burglary (MD, -4; U.S., +1), and larceny (MD, -3; U.S., +2).

In 1952, Delaware imposed the last judicial flogging in the United States. Crime in 1953 was down in Delaware and up everywhere else: robbery (DE, -10; U.S., +7), aggravated assault (DE, -26; U.S., +4), burglary (DE, -22; U.S., +5), larceny (DE, -1; U.S., +3). When the floggings ceased, crime rose again in 1954. Governor McKeldin commuted a flogging sentence for wife-beating in Maryland in 1952, arguing that he wouldn't commit a "crime" against the criminal. His crime was against Maryland citizens, who in 1953 endured an increase in crimes to ten times the national average: robbery (MD, +24; U.S., +7), aggravated assault (MD, +4; U.S., +4), burglary (MD, +18; U.S., +5), larceny (MD, +30; U.S., +3).

While flogging's deterrence did not extend to rape and murder, flogging clearly "beat" the national average. Flogging adds efficiency to the virtue of effectiveness. Consider that corrections spending has outstripped inflation by two to one for 20 years. Incarceration now costs $59 per prisoner per day; new prison space costs $60,000 per bed. In the present circumstances, the cost of punishing the offender often exceeds the cost of the vandalized property.

Flogging is also more egalitarian than fines. Like a regressive tax, the limits on fines fall unevenly. The rich consider them a nuisance; the criminal a business expense. Viewed objectively, flogging is also *more humane* than incarceration. In all four of the 1946 cases, the convicts *chose* flogging in lieu of jail terms ranging from one to three years. When the accused is employed, fines and flogging may allow him to keep his job, while he is certain to lose it after imprisonment. This may keep his family off the welfare rolls, and it preserves his self-respect. Keeping first offenders away from career criminals might even lower the rate of recidivism. With the occurrence of male rape in prisons and an HIV incidence among male prisoners as high as eight percent, any time in jail can be a *de facto* death sentence. The AIDS epidemic and cramped conditions also make prison ideal for the spread of antibiotic-resistant strains of tuberculosis.

In 1978, the European Court of Human Rights overturned a flogging sentence in the Isle of Man, but not because it constituted "torture" or "inhuman punishment." The court merely found the punishment "degrading" because it was applied by strangers to the bare buttocks. Our constitutional test is "cruel and unusual," not "degrading," and the state laws allowing flogging were repealed by legislatures, not overturned in court.

Given the wide contemporaneous use of corporal punishment, the intent of the constitutional convention was clearly not to ban it. The Fifth Amendment implies the legality of corporal punishment when it states, "nor shall any person be subject for the same offense to be twice put in jeopardy of life or limb." Public flogging for 25 different offenses in Delaware was not abolished until 1972, and 16 countries still employ flogging worldwide. The pillory and the stocks could combine milder discomfort with social opprobrium. Corporal punishment is not cruel; we should see to it that it is not unusual. We bomb Serbs, Iraqis, Vietnamese, Koreans, Chinese, Italians, Germans, and Japanese to defend other people's cities; why do we recoil from corporal punishment to defend our own? The only problem with the legislation that was proposed in Maryland is that it does not apply to violent or adult crime. It should be the criminal, not the citizen, who turns the other cheek.

Sherman McCall is a physician in Washington, D.C.

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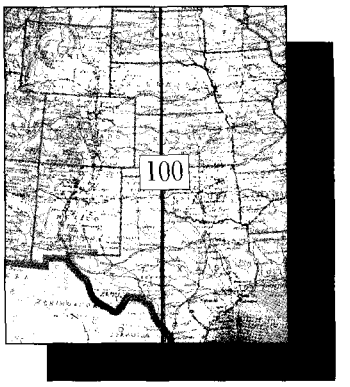
The Hundredth Meridian

by Chilton Williamson, Jr.

Hunters and Gatherers



The carcass lay across a slab of rock at about the level of my knees. I estimated its undressed weight to have been around 700 pounds: substantial for a two-year-old elk. I had managed to position it so that when I drew the guts out they fell clear of the slab onto the rocks below. The rocks, already unstable, were now slippery with blood, gastric juices, and the bile-colored contents of the maw. Moving carefully to avoid breaking an ankle, I sawed through the pelvic bone to spread the hindquarters, then drew back the near fore and hind legs and tied them off to a couple of uphill rocks. In this warm weather I wished to ventilate the carcass while using the rib cage and hide for shade. The spike had been in fine condition, with a shiny thick coat that was good to touch and half an inch of fat on the brisket. When I had him fixed the way I wanted him I picked up the organs and the stomach contents and threw them farther downhill to draw the flies. Then I wiped the blade of my knife and saw on my pants leg, and scabbarded them. My rifle, the magazine stripped of shells, lay against a log on a patch of grass 15 feet from the edge of the rock slide. I shouldered it, and looked back at the elk. He had his eyes open still, but I didn't care about him as an animal anymore. He was just a huge piece of dead meat needing to be cut up, loaded, hauled off the mountain, and back to town for butchering.

It was warm in town all the next day, and I thought of the meat. The morning after I rose at five, brought the horses from the ranch, and picked up Larry Reed, who had offered to help with the carcass in exchange for a share of it. A cover of gray cloud had moved in overnight, and heavier clouds edged in paler gray and white like ocean waves were breaking over the mountains to the north. It started to rain, and almost at once the clay road commenced to be slick. "Do you have chains?" Larry asked. "Yes. But I think that it will clear now. There's no wind driving those clouds and the sky is clear everywhere except above the mountains." As we went into the switchbacks going down to Fontenelle crossing I was aware of the trailer fishtailing slightly, and downshifted to compound low. "I hope we don't have to take this thing off the hill in a blizzard." "Well." Larry shrugged. "If we do, we do." A strong wind blew through Fontenelle gap, but the sky above Indian Ridge was lightening and the clouds evaporated into blue as they came sailing off the mountains. We saddled quickly. I rolled the panniers and tied them behind the saddle and put the sandwiches and two poly bottles into the saddle bags. Finally I gave Larry the mare and stepped up to the gelding who, spooky from wind and the weather change, sidestepped me on my first attempt to mount him.

The farther in we rode above West Bear Trap Creek and the higher we climbed the more the sky cleared, until it felt almost like a day in summer when we reached the base of Indian Ridge at a quarter before noon. We turned aside from the talus fall and rode on uphill among young pines before dismounting and leading the rest of the way. The carcass after two days was undisturbed, but an odor of decay lingered above the front quarter, which was still warm. I had neglected to remove all of the trachea, and once we had that out the meat smelled wholly fresh and clean. In spite of the warm weather, its coldness stiffened our fingers as we skinned out the haunches, shoulders, and barrel, and cut flesh in great slabs and rounds from the white bones. Larry's Green River knife, for which he said he had paid eight dollars, cut much better than my own knife; when I admired it, he offered to give me his other one when we got back to town. We had the animal boned by two o'clock, and the mare loaded in 15 minutes. The carcass resembled the old man's great fish after the sharks had been after it, but we had beat the bears to the meat and it was safely secured now in the panniers. "Lunch?" I inquired. We were both covered in blood, hair, and tissue almost to the shoulders. "Why don't we go down as far as the creek," Larry suggested, "and wash up?"

Two days later a cold front moved in bringing snow and high winds. When the weather cleared Mary Thoman phoned, wanting me to help gather the last of Dick and Susie Thoman's cows for trucking to their winter pasturage north of La Barge. I was at the ranch a little past eight the next morning and we caught the horses we needed out of the corral and saddled them in the shadowy barn and loaded them into the trailer hitched to the flatbed truck. Dick and Susie had gone ahead with most of the family in the semi, and we had with us the elder daughter Dixie, Mickey Thoman, and a schoolteacher come from Green River with her saddle and blanket. Mary had packed a good lunch and we were in almost a holiday mood as we started up the ranch road to the highway, looking to make the most of the closest thing ranchers know to a holiday. We drove south to the Farson Cutoff and the highway bridge across the Green River where we split up, Mickey and Linda, the teacher, riding downstream on the west side of the river and Mary, Dixie, and I crossing the bridge on horseback to pick up some cows that Mary had spotted the day before from her airplane. The day was windless and mild, the sun present but remote as if sealed behind a pane of smoked glass. We kicked the cattle out of the bottom and set them moving south on the bluff above the river in the direction of Big Island, unfastening layers of clothing as we rode. We had not ridden far before Dick Thoman's blue truck appeared out of a prairie swale, laboring doggedly across the sagebrush in our direction. Mary galloped away to speak with him, and on her return explained that Dick now proposed to truck the cows rather than drive them to Big Island. We turned the herd, pushed it back over the bluff, and followed it down

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through the steep soft clay to the bottom and across a succession of gulleys to the fence, where we dismounted and tied up to sagebushes to eat our lunch, while the cows bedded gratefully at a discreet distance of 50 yards. We ate ham and cheese sandwiches and drank fruit drinks, and were concerned with dividing a Twinkie in three pieces when the flatbed truck and trailer arrived at the bridge. We mounted quickly, roused the cows from their nap, and drove them across the highway into the riverine cottonwoods, where Mickey and Linda had made an improvised corral with an arrangement of hinged panels placed between the rig and the fenceline. After some effort we drove the cattle into the corral, then beat them with sticks of rotten cottonwood until they crowded into the trailer. As we were loading the panels after them, Dick showed up with the semi, and an electric cattle prod. "Those aren't my cows," he explained. "What?" Mary asked him. "They aren't our cows." "What do you mean, not your cows?" The animals' new winter coats had partially obscured the brands, which in any case we had not thought to check. "Well," Mary said, "I guess we're fired." Susie thought the cows belonged to Zucotniks, and Mickey and Linda agreed to truck them back to the Thoman ranch and put them in a separate corral. Whoever's cows they were, we had saved him the effort of gathering them.

I rode with Dick in his 1979 Kenworth, the engine smooth and quiet after more than a million miles, and his eight-year-old son Ben down the Green River to a simple-truss bridge and a corral close by its western end. On the short trip there, Ben described catching a two-and-a-half pound brown trout in the river below Fontenelle Dam, and Dick and I discussed our feelings regarding Bill Clinton. Behind the bluff on the opposite bank of the river straight plumes of steam and smoke rose from the Rhône-Poulenc trona plant near Big Island. Dick made a wide turn with the semi and backed it against the loading chute by which his tall gray horse, unsaddled, stood tied. We climbed down from the cab and Ben piled after us, on his way to saddle the elderly pony his parents had bought him the previous fall. While Mary and I readied our horses Ben, with his small brother mounted behind him on the croup, galloped up and down in the road spraying stones, his face very white and earnest above the potbellied pony's graying patient one, until his mother, having bitted her feisty bay, took the little boy from him and set him behind her own saddle where she already held the younger daughter against the pommel.

We divided into two groups, Mary, Dixie, and I riding cross country toward a distant line of trees marking the irrigation ditches where Dick had seen three bulls two days before, and Susie with the two children and Ben on the pony keeping to the river bottom in search of the herd. It was now three o'clock in the afternoon: a hard breeze had arisen and an overcast moved in, gray sky above gray desert. We refastened our clothes and rode for the most part in silence, Dixie maintaining the grave self-composed dignity appropriate to 13 years old as we squinted against the wind for bulls. After riding for three-quarters of an hour we spied a ruined headgate and reached the first of the ditches. Wide, smooth, and grassy in the bottoms, they made good windbreaks for cattle, but no cattle sheltered there this afternoon. Upstream the Green, swollen by fall rains, flowed toward us in dark rippling bends, through leafless cottonwood breaks and the empty yellow meadows. We turned the horses and followed it back downstream, Mary and Dixie riding together while I diverged in the direction of the river bank, looking for cows and fighting the horse who, separated from the others, whinnied, sidestepped, spun, and finally commenced to buck before I got him in control again. I picked up seven head of stragglers in the willows and together we drove these past an abandoned ranch at which the horse, going at a lope, shied and made a final and nearly successful attempt at unloading me, back to the corral where Susie and Ben held the gathered herd in the road, waiting for us.

When we had driven all the cattle into the corral, Mary and Dick began cutting out the cows and loading the calves into the upper compartments of the stock trailer while Dixie held back the cows with a stick, Ben ran at the calves waving his arms and shouting, and Bill Thoman looked on from under the brim of his sweatstained Stetson. The gray twilight thickened with dust, cattle bawled and milled, dogs jumped, and the aluminum trailer rattled and banged, swaying on its springs, as one rufous back after another clambered up the chute and vanished inside. When the calves refused to move forward in their berth, Susie Thoman ran at the trailer, climbed hand over hand up the side of the metal cage, and began prodding the animals through the spaces between the slats. It was while she was doing this that I recalled an environmentalist member of a range conservation committee telling Mary that she and the other members of the Thoman family needed to get themselves retrained for some environmentally more acceptable line of work than ranching.

Ranch life is not just admirable, it is enviable. And it is envied, but usually not for the right reasons. In the West, the environmentalist movement in general, and the range reform program in particular, are mainly an expression of landless activists' jealousy and resentment of landowners, though they themselves would not know what to do with landed property if they had it, beyond putting in a swimming pool and posting NO TRESPASSING signs. In environmentalism, environmentalists have discovered a means to exercise political and administrative control over something to which they can never hope to gain the legitimate rights of ownership. Urban in culture and outlook, though not always resident in cities, they are aggressively scornful of the virtues, satisfactions, and pleasures of agriculture and pastoralism —alienated completely from the grounded life and culture of the American West. The greatest irony of environmentalism is in its claim to be the sworn enemy of modern commercial technoindustrialism and humanity's Faustian ambition to transcend nature, since the typical environmentalist is not someone who regularly engages nature on a practical or utilitarian basis, but rather on an aesthetic or recreational—which is to say, a superficial—one. He is not a rancher, nor is he a hunter: if he is anything more than an armchair outdoorsman, he is probably just a backpacker and a photographer. So far from accepting the traditionalist ideal of man-in-nature, and the idea of human culture as a product of man in his honest, active, and fruitful relationship with nature, he aims at the abstract Enlightenment ideal of man-outside-of-nature—which gives him more in common with the bank presidents, utilities executives, Chamber of Commerce members, resort developers, and Republican politicians he hates and opposes than with the Indians, Bushmen, Eskimos, and other hunter-gatherers he praises and defends. c

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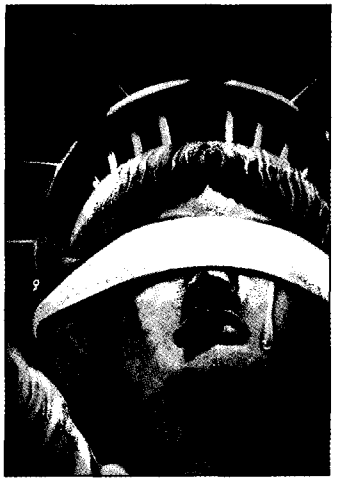

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